

Taliban forced down plane carrying Tajik leader

TEHRAN (AP) — Taliban fighter jets forced a U.N. aircraft carrying a Tajik rebel leader to land in Afghanistan on Saturday, Tehran Radio reported. The plane was flying from the Iranian city of Mashhad to northern Afghanistan when it was intercepted by Taliban fighters and forced to land at a Taliban-controlled air base, the broadcast said. The aircraft was carrying the head of the Islamic opposition fighting the Moscow-backed Tajik government, Syed Abdullah Nuri, eight other Tajiks and several Iranians, the radio said. There was no information on the fate of the passengers, the radio said. Mr. Nuri was expected to meet with Tajik President Emomali Rakhmonov on Monday for talks on the latest rebel offensive. The United Nations has 44 military observers in Tajikistan and is trying to mediate an end to the conflict. The Taliban control about two-thirds of Afghanistan.

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King and Sheikh Zayed stress peace process should advance on accords already signed

HM begins UAE visit, first in more than six years

ABU DHABI (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein and United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan on Saturday reaffirmed that the Middle East peace process should proceed on the basis of agreements reached between the Arabs and Israel.

The two leaders also underlined the need for this process to be comprehensive and lasting. The Jordan News Agency Petra reported.

Petra said King Hussein reviewed with the UAE president pan-Arab affairs and underlined the need for ending Arab differences among countries and reestablishing Arab solidarity.

It said they also reviewed issues of common concern and ways for promoting Jordanian-UAE ties in various fields.

King Hussein, who arrived in the UAE at the head of an official delegation on his first trip to the country since 1990, congratulated Sheikh Zayed on the success of a recent surgical operation, and also on the country's national day anniversary and Sheikh Zayed's 30 years of rule.

The talks were attended by the Jordanian delegation accompanying King Hussein on the visit, including their Royal Highnesses Princess Abdullah and Hamzeh, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Royal Coun Chief Awa Khasawneh, the King's advisor on tribal affairs Hameidi Al Fayed, Minister of Justice Abdul Karim Dughmi, Minister of Youth Mohammad Daoudieh and Nabil Tahount, Jordan's ambassador to the UAE.

The UAE delegation to the talks included senior government officials and

high ranking army officers. Sheikh Zayed, the 79-year-old UAE president, met the King at the airport although he is still recuperating from neck surgery that has forced him to miss a Gulf Arab summit in Qatar for the first time.

The King, who will hold further meetings with Sheikh Zayed on Sunday, was accorded an official welcome ceremony upon arrival in Abu Dhabi.

Upon his departure from Amman Saturday, His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad was sworn in as Regent before the Council of Ministers.

King Hussein last visited the UAE six months before Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait on Aug. 2, 1990. They occupied the emirate for seven months before they were ejected by a U.S.-dominated multinational coalition.

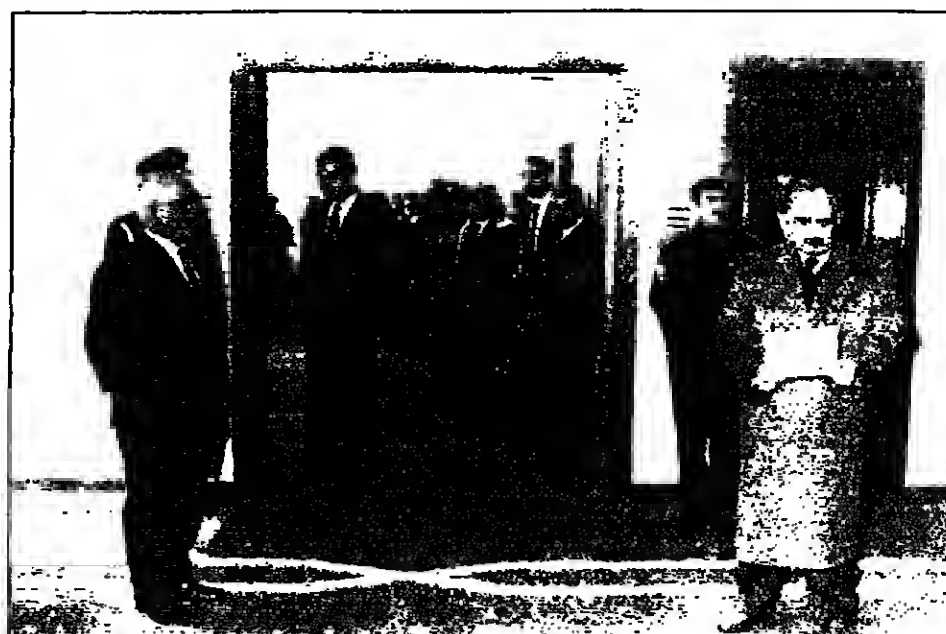
King Hussein came to

Abu Dhabi as Gulf Arab leaders opened their annual summit in Doha and a day after he met Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Al Sahaf, whose country is about to resume oil exports.

In a policy turnaround over the past two weeks, the UAE called for removing the six-year economic embargo on Baghdad and appealed to Arab states to break the sanctions and restore relations with Iraq. "I believe Iraq will be one of the issues to be discussed by King Hussein in the UAE," said a diplomat.

Diplomatic sources said the King's trip to the UAE meant their ties were back to normal.

"The reception of the King by Sheikh Zayed despite his illness showed the UAE wanted to tell him he is most welcome here," one source said.



His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad is sworn in as Regent before His Majesty King Hussein's departure for the United Arab Emirates on Saturday (Petra photo)

Huge haul of cigarettes and weapons seized near border

AMMAN (Petra) — The badia and border police forces on Saturday announced the arrest of an unspecified number of smugglers and drug traffickers who crossed into Jordanian territory from a neighbouring Arab state. Cigarettes, firearms, military equipment and spare parts of bulldozers were seized from the smugglers.

Brigadier Thaher Al Fawaz, the forces' commander, said that his men had been tipped about the

smuggling attempt which involved several vehicles.

"The smugglers opened fire on the badia and border forces who returned the fire and eventually arrested the suspects, but no injuries were reported," said Brig Fawaz.

Seized in the operation were 3,333 cartons of cigarettes of different brands, weapons, ammunition and rockets as well as ladies handbags and spare parts of bulldozers.

On Thursday customs

officers at the Ramtha post on the border with Syria reported the seizure of 33 kilograms of hashish found hidden inside a Jordanian truck.

Public Security Department (PSD) Director Nasouh Muhteddin said thanks to close cooperation between the customs department and his forces five smuggling and drug trafficking attempts were aborted recently near Jordan's borders with Arab countries.

King receives good wishes on Israa Wal Miraj

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti on Saturday sent His Majesty King Hussein a cable of good wishes on the eve of the Al Israa Wal Miraj on Sunday.

The prime minister recalled that the King has been keen on providing protection to the holy places in Jerusalem where the Prophet Mohammad made his nocturnal journey to heaven.

"The feast is a holy occasion and a reminder of your keenness on protecting the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa Mosque, both of which are being restored and refurbished through generous Hashemite donations," said the prime minister. The holy occasion is observed throughout the Kingdom by religious celebrations. The government had announced Sunday a public holiday.

The Royal Court announced Saturday that it has received cables of good wishes addressed to the King from leaders of various public and private organisations, the business community, heads of tribes and municipal councils, trade unions and members of the public.

Ensur meets Syrian minister

AMMAN (J.T.) — Acting Prime Minister, Minister of Higher Education and acting Foreign Minister Abdullah Ensour Saturday received Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa, who was on his way to the Indonesian capital Jakarta to take part in the meetings of foreign ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Conference. Mr. Ensour and Mr. Sharaa discussed bilateral relations, issues of common interest particularly the peace process in the Middle East. Mr. Sharaa expressed appreciation for the warm welcome he received in Jordan.

French general leaves

AMMAN (Petra) — The chairman of the joint chiefs-of-staff of France, Lieutenant General Jean Philip, left Amman Saturday after a three-day official visit to the Kingdom.

Pakistani team arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — A Pakistani delegation representing the Public Administration Institute in Peshawar arrived in Amman Saturday on a five-day official visit to the Kingdom during which they will meet with Minister of Administrative Development Kamal Nassar, the director general of the Public Administration Institute of Jordan and other Jordanian officials.

EU envoy arrives in Egypt

CAIRO (AP) — The European Union's (EU) envoy to the Middle East arrived in Cairo on Saturday to discuss stalled Arab-Israeli peace talks with Egyptian leaders. Miguel Moratinos said the peace process needs encouragement from the United States and the EU. The EU's principle role is to convince Israel to adhere to the agreements it signed with the Palestinians, Mr. Moratinos told reporters. Mr. Moratinos was named special envoy in October as part of a European bid to be more active in Israeli-Arab peace negotiations (see page 12).

GCC opens summit without Bahrain; focus is on peace talks, Iran and Iraq

DOHA (Agencies) — Bahrain, embroiled in a territorial dispute with Qatar, staged an unprecedented boycott of the annual summit of Gulf Arab states which opened in the Qatari capital Saturday.

While leaders from Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) took their seats at the conference table, Bahrain's chair remained empty.

Qatar's Emir Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani said in an opening speech at the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit that he felt "strong regrets about Bahrain's absence" despite last-ditch mediation to prevent a boycott.

The Emir of Bahrain, Sheikh Issa Ben Salman Al Khalifa, said he would boycott the summit to protest Qatar's handling of their dispute over the Hawar islands in the Gulf.

It was the first boycott of a summit since the GCC was formed in 1981 amid fears that Iran's Shiite Muslim revolution might spread and Bahrain's move stirred new fears that "foreign forces" could exploit Gulf divisions.

The Emir of Qatar also regretted the absence of Saudi Arabia's King Fahd, 75, and UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan, 79, who were absent for health reasons.

Crown Prince Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz stood in for the second year running for King Fahd, who suffered a stroke last year, while the UAE Vice-President Sheikh Maktoum Ben Rashid Al Maktoum replaced Sheikh Zayed who underwent a neck operation recently.

The only heads of state attending were Sheikh Hamad of Qatar, Sultan Qaboos of Oman, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah of Kuwait.

The Gulf leaders planned to discuss cooperation in military, security, political and economic affairs as well as how to deal with Iraq and the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Crown Prince Abdullah said on arrival in Doha that he regretted the "aggression against our Palestinian brothers on the beloved land of Palestine."

"Does this world not see that peace is not achieved by force and seizure of legitimate rights?" he said.

He said the Middle East peace process had been dealt repeated blows. "Only God knows the extent of the dangers" which would follow the collapse of the process, he said.

Sheikh Hamad told the summit the GCC was urging Israel to respect agreements reached with the Arabs in order to reach a just and durable peace.

It was "necessary to respect accords concluded under the peace process and achieve progress on all tracks, especially the Syrian and Lebanese ones," Sheikh Hamad said.

Qatar and Oman, which are the only GCC states to have begun trade ties with Israel, recently froze steps towards normalisation with the Jewish state in protest at the headline policies of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Sheikh Hamad said the GCC states "are working to promote Gulf security and stability on the basis of the principles of good neighbourly relations, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of each country, non-interference in their internal affairs and respect for international law."

Muasher visit to Israel not finalised yet

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Information Marwan Muasher said Saturday final arrangements were not complete for a visit he is expected to pay to Israel to explain Jordanian position towards the peace process and the need to advance it on all tracks.

Dr. Muasher, who was speaking in a press conference after a regular Cabinet session chaired by acting Prime Minister and Minister of Higher Education Abdullah Ensour, was commenting on a report that he was scheduled to visit Israel on Tuesday for talks with Israeli leaders on the stalled Arab-Israeli peace process.

Dr. Muasher, a former ambassador to Israel, will be taking messages from Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti to Israeli Premier

Benyamin Netanyahu and Foreign Minister David Levy, the report said.

Jordan, which signed a peace treaty with Israel in October 1994, has repeatedly called on the Israeli government to honour its commitments under the peace accords, particularly the long-delayed troop withdrawal from the West Bank town of Hebron, due to have taken place in March.

In an interview with the Israeli newspaper Maariv last Sunday, Mr. Kabariti expressed frustration with Mr. Netanyahu and accused him of saying one thing and doing another.

Dr. Muasher also said Saturday that Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Al Sahaf's visit to Jordan on Friday and his talks here had shown clearly that Baghdad was truly willing

to implement U.N. resolutions.

Dr. Muasher added that Jordan supports Iraq as well as the Iraqi people and calls for lifting the sanctions on the country.

He said: "We also discussed with the Iraqi minister the murder of Jordanian driver in Iraq and that Jordan should be informed of any further development in this case."

His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Kabariti held talks with Mr. Sahaf in Amman on Friday. The Iraqi minister was on his way to Jakarta, Indonesia, to attend a meeting of the foreign ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Conference.

Iraqi Trade Minister Mohammad Mehdi Saleh is due in Amman on Sunday

(Continued on page 12)

Cabinet approves recommendations for amnesty

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Council of Ministers on Saturday endorsed a list of prisoners to be released under an amnesty granted by His Majesty King Hussein, Information Minister Marwan Muasher said.

Speaking to reporters after a regular Cabinet session, Dr. Muasher said the list along with recommendations prepared by a technical committee would be presented to the King for his approval.

The amnesty covers all prisoners except those who were convicted of with espionage, drug-trafficking, embezzlement, bribery, traffic fines, robbery, rape and kidnapping.

Amman hosts exhibition of equipment and light weapons for special forces

By P.V.Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Seventy companies from 20 countries are taking part in a two-day exhibition in Amman this week of sophisticated equipment and light weapons that are used by special forces and law enforcement agencies.

The exhibition, organised by the U.K.-based Coningency and Operational Procurement Exhibition (COPEX), under the aegis of the Jordanian Special Forces commanded by His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, opens on Monday at the Amman International Motor Show hall on the way to Queen Alia International Airport.

The exhibition, the first of its kind not only in Jordan but also in the Middle East,

will feature surveillance equipment to suit most situations, rough terrain vehicles and light weapons for use by military, police, customs and border guards, said Julian Winkley, a COPEX spokesman.

Also on display will be civil defence and mine-clearing equipment and advanced communication devices as well as weapons that help law enforcement officers deal with hostage situations and undertake anti-terrorist operations.

The Jordanian Special Forces will take part by displaying specially-built vehicles for the first time in such an exhibition. Details of the Jordanian presentation are expected to be unveiled on Monday.

Admission will be restricted to government representatives and person-

nel from law enforcement agencies and customs officials and border guards as well as those who "can provide evidence of their professional interest in the type of equipment on display," said a press release by the organisers.

Exhibitors include manufacturers from the U.K., Germany, the U.S., Denmark, Greece, France, South Africa, Spain, Australia, Israel, Italy, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, said Mr. Winkley.

Mr. Winkley said the Jordanian Special Forces were closely involved in the organisation of the event and would get the net proceeds (from rentals of space for exhibitors) for its own use.

An initial payment of

(Continued on page 12)

Arafat and Mubarak discuss peace process

CAIRO (AFP) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat held talks here Saturday with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on the stalled Middle East peace process, officials said.

The meeting took place at Mr. Mubarak's private residence in Cairo under a media black-out and Mr. Arafat made no public comment, said a spokesman for the president's office.

Palestinian Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) number two Mahmoud Abbas were also present during the meeting, the spokesman added.


Mr. Arafat was due to discuss with Mr. Mubarak "the results of two meetings on Monday and Tuesday in Livon between the Egyptian foreign minister and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu," he said.

Amr Musa described his meetings with Mr. Netanyahu as "fruitful," but on Friday played down reports of a possible Arafat-Netanyahu summit in Cairo over the weekend, saying such a meeting had not been "decided upon or prepared for."

Meanwhile, Mr. Arafat warned in an interview published Saturday that there is a strong possibility of military conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbours, particularly Syria.

Asked by the Arabic-news-papper Al Hayat whether there was a likelihood of war, Mr. Arafat replied: "Certainly."

"There is a concentration of Israeli troops on the Syrian front estimated at three divisions with another division on the Lebanese front, another in Gaza and one more division besieging our towns on the West Bank," he said.



CONGRATULATIONS ARAB BANK

Presents sincere congratulations
and best wishes to

HIS MAJESTY KING HUSSEIN

On the occasion of the

Prophetic Ascension

May God grant your Majesty
and the Arab and Islamic nations
further prosperity and success
in the years to come.

Syria tells Europe Israel should respect Golan undertaking

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria has told the European Union's (EU) Middle East envoy it wants to resume peace talks with Israel but Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should honour the outcome of talks held with his predecessor, officials said on Saturday.

They said Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa told Miguel Angel Moratinos during talks in Damascus on Friday night Syria was keen to reach a just and comprehensive peace with Israel on the basis of U.N. resolutions and the land-for-peace principle.

"The minister affirmed that talks should resume from the point where they ended with the previous Israeli government," one official said.

Israel's new prime minister angered Arabs by rejecting the land-for-peace formula which was the basis of the U.S.-brokered peace talks.

Syria said the former Labour-led government which was defeated by Mr. Netanyahu in May elections had agreed to withdraw fully from the Golan Heights, seized by Israel in 1967. Israel denied that.

Syria has held sporadic peace talks with Israel since 1991 but the negotiations were stalled over the fate of the Golan. The former Israeli government said publicly it was ready for territorial concessions in the Golan in return for full peace.

No talks were held between Syria and Israel since Mr. Netanyahu took office in June. Israel's previous government broke off the negotiations in March following a wave of suicide bombings in which 59 people were killed in Israel.

Mr. Moratinos, Spain's ambassador to Israel, left Damascus on Saturday after a short visit to Syria. He had talks with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Israeli officials before coming to Syria.

The EU appointed Mr. Moratinos in October to rescue the faltering Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.

The envoy told Reuters in Damascus on Friday that Israel wanted to resume talks with Damascus as soon as possible.

Last week in Spain Mr. Netanyahu was vague on the possibility of territorial compromise with Syria over the Golan Heights.

"I have not ruled out a territorial discussion," Mr. Netanyahu told reporters in Madrid.

But Syria's official media resumed its attacks on Mr. Netanyahu on Saturday and urged Arabs to sever ties with his government.

Ameed Khouli of the official daily Al Thawra said Mr. Netanyahu was driving the region to the verge of war because of what he called the Israeli premier's extreme policies.



Israeli policemen carry a Jewish settler to a waiting police van after he was arrested in a disturbance at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron Friday night (Reuters photo)

2 settlers held for vandalism at Ibrahimi Mosque

HEBRON (AFP) — Jewish settlers in the flashpoint West Bank town of Hebron clashed with police after two of their members were arrested for trying to pull down a Muslim sign at a holy site, police said Saturday.

Dozens of settlers clashed with police late Friday after the arrest of Noam Arnon, spokesman for the city's 400-strong settlers, and an accomplice, police said.

The pair were caught trying to tear down a sign inside Ibrahimi Mosque, a pilgrimage site for both Jews and Muslims, which

had been put up by Waqf — the organisation that manages Muslim holy sites.

Calm returned to Hebron on Saturday, but heavy security reinforcements were drafted onto the streets of the city where the settler community is surrounded by a Palestinian population of 120,000, an army spokesman said.

Tension in Hebron is at fever pitch as Israel prepares to withdraw its troops from 85 per cent of the city and hand it over to Palestinian municipal control in line with 1995 Oslo accords.

Erbakan signs \$600m Israel deal

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan has signed a \$600 million agreement with Israel for the modernisation of Turkish F-4 fighter-bombers, the state-run Anatolian news agency reported on Friday.

Mr. Erbakan, who reportedly signed the accord on Thursday, had pledged to scrap an earlier military cooperation agreement between Turkey and Israel before taking office in June. He has not since acted on the pledge.

Turkish President Suleyman Demirel approved the deal on Friday, the president's office said in a statement.

Turkish officials were not available to comment on the signing of the latest accord, which was welcomed by Israel's embassy in Ankara.

"We feel very pleased that the project in question has been signed by Prime Minister Erbakan after a long period of talks," an embassy spokesman was quoted as telling Anatolian.

"We want the project to be put into effect as soon as possible," the spokesman said.

The five-year modernisation project covers 54 U.S.-made F-4 planes and will be financed with Israeli credit.

Twenty-six of the Turkish air force planes will be modernised in Israel and 28 in the western Turkish town of Eskisehir.

Israeli commercial banks approved the \$600 million credit package by Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI) in October.

The five-year deal will involve the installation of advanced avionics systems including radar and electronic warfare and navigation systems.

Israeli officials said last weekend that they had renewed the military cooperation agreement with Turkey, which had drawn the ire of Syria, Iran and Islamists.

Egyptian, British police discuss militants

CAIRO (AFP) — A group of Egyptian police on Saturday wound up a six-day visit to London aimed at coordinating the fight against armed militants, the government daily Al-Ahram reported.

During the trip, the Egyptian officers gave British anti-terrorist police "important information on (Egyptian) terrorists living in London, both those convicted of carrying out attacks in Egypt or abroad and those who are being hunted," said the paper.

Al-Ahram said the suspects belonged to the two main armed militant groups in Egypt, the Gamaa Islamiyah and Jihad, as well as the unnamed Muslim Brotherhood. Egypt maintains that senior Jihad and

Gamaa figures have been living in London since the early 1990s, including Jihad leader Tawfik Serri who was sentenced to death in absentia in 1994 for the failed assassination attempt on former Prime Minister Atef Sedki in 1993.

Cairo also says the Muslim Brotherhood's Western Europe office is based in London. The Egyptian press has been fiercely critical of the British government for allegedly allowing Egyptian militants to stay in Britain.

Al-Ahram said Egyptian police had visited London on several occasions in recent months, and that this week's visit had stemmed from an official invitation.

Unrest-hit Iranian town remains tense; deaths and arrests reported

BAKHTARAN, Iran (AP) — Armed riot police Saturday patrolled the streets of a troubled neighbourhood in this western city, where fatal clashes erupted earlier this week over the death of a Sunni religious leader.

Shops were closed and residents stayed indoors, bringing an eerie calm to the Javanshir district. Dozens of helmeted riot guards with machineguns stood watch on every street corner.

But other parts of this city of 700,000 were calm, with life going on as normal. Bakhtaran is 450 kilometres southwest of the Iranian capital, Tehran.

Residents were hesitant to talk about the unrest that erupted Wednesday. Most people had vague reports about the trouble, and did not have details.

One taxi driver said that two protesters and a policeman had been killed at a funeral for Mullah Mohammad Rabbani, who allegedly died under mysterious circumstances. He said he had not witnessed the killings, but had heard the news from others who had.

Violence erupted after mourners at the funeral accused the government of assassinating Rabbani, a Sunni Muslim prayer leader. Officials said the 64-year-old Rabbani had died of a heart attack, and that his body was found beside his car.

The dead security officer, a colonel, was to be buried Saturday, city residents said.

Iran's main exile opposition group, the Iraq-based Mujahadeen-e-Khalq, reported dozens of protesters killed and hundreds

wounded in cities in the province.

It said nine people had been killed and 60 wounded in the rioting in the city of Bakhtaran, capital of the province of the same name.

Another exile opposition group, the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, reported violence in several other cities in the province.

The opposition reports could not be independently confirmed.

The official Tehran Radio said Thursday that several people were arrested after unrest during a funeral for Rabbani, but it gave no reports of people killed.

Rabbani was a leader of the mainstream Sunni Muslim sect, a minority in Iran which is predominantly Shiite Muslim. He also worked for the state-run radio and television network.

Arafat: Kuwait failed to agree to improve ties despite repeated efforts

CAIRO (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat expressed frustration in an interview published on Saturday over Kuwait's refusal to agree to improve relations with the Palestinians.

"Unfortunately," Mr. Arafat said in an interview with the Arabic-language newspaper Al-Hayat, Kuwait had failed to agree to improved ties "despite numerous efforts on my part."

Kuwait accused the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) of backing Iraq during the 1990-91 Gulf conflict. Many Palestinians in the emirate were also accused of collaborating with the Iraqi invaders and subsequently deported.

Mr. Arafat has denied the Kuwaiti charges of backing Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait and said he had called for an Iraqi withdrawal from the emirate shortly after the occupation.

He told Al-Hayat that he had also helped secure the release of 33 Kuwaiti prisoners

of war held by Iraq after the war and sought information on the fate of other missing Kuwaitis.

"The Iraqis, however, say they were only holding these 33 people," he said.

Asked about a Kuwaiti demand that he apologise for supporting the Iraqi invasion before relations can be restored, Mr. Arafat "challenged" the Kuwaiti authorities to prove the charge.

Mr. Arafat added that he found it ironic that he was being asked to apologise when Palestinians living in Kuwait were humiliated and 440,000 Palestinians ordered to leave the country following liberation.

Mr. Arafat also said he favoured the election of a vice-president but did not say when such a post would be created.

"If something happens to me, the PLO would immediately co-optate an interim president until someone else is elected," he said.

Hamas says it is ready to relaunch campaign

CAIRO (AFP) — The headline "Palestinian group Hamas vowed on Saturday to revive its campaign with greater force after being hard hit by joint, Palestinian-Israeli security efforts."

"The Hamas movement has suffered greatly, particularly during the first half of the year... because of the cooperation between (Palestinian leader Yasser) Arafat's security services and those of the Zionists aiming to arrest and monitor militant Palestinians," spokesman Samir Ghoshe said.

The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) is fighting a violent campaign against the autonomy accords signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

In late February and early March the group was responsible for three of the four suicide bombings in Israel that left a total of 58 people dead, including the bombers.

In a statement received here marking the ninth anniversary of the intifada, Mr. Ghoshe said Hamas had "overcome this difficult stage despite continued arrests and pursuits (of its militants) inside and outside" Palestinian territories.

"The movement is reorganising internally and renewing external relations in order to revive its struggle with greater force and strength," he added, while calling for "resistance and jihad (holy war)" against Israel.

In the wake of the suicide bombings, Palestinian police launched a crackdown in march against militants.

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Qatar's emir to bring home deposed father

DUBAI (AP) — Qatar's ruler wants to bring back home his exiled father, whom he deposed in a coup last year, the London-based Al-Hayat newspaper said Saturday.

Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani will visit his exiled father Sheikh Khalifa Ben Hamad Al Thani in France this week and the two men are expected to return home together, the Arabic-language daily quoted unidentified official sources as saying in Qatar.

Sheikh Hamad will travel to meet his father after a three-day summit of Gulf Arab countries which opens in Qatar on Saturday, the Saudi-owned newspaper said.

No official word on the report was immediately available from Qatar and Sheikh Khalifa, the ousted ruler, has yet to make any comment on the present state of relations with his son.



Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa

a number of times... and I hope to visit him after the summit," he said.

Beside the June 1995 palace coup, relations between father and son have been strained over billions of dollars in missing state funds. A settlement on the issue was reached in October.

Earlier this year, Qatari authorities said they had foiled a coup attempt backed by the ousted emir to return to power.

Government officials in Qatar say the former emir is welcome to return home, but only as the "father" of all Qataris.

Sheikh Hamad seized power while his father was vacationing in Europe. Qatar, with about 200,000 citizens, sits on top of the world's third-largest reserves of natural gas.

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PROGRAMME TWO

14:05...Fievel's American Tails
14:30...You Bet Your Life
15:00...Cajou
15:30...Week-Ends Specials
16:00...Doc...World Echo
16:30...The Famous Five (Drama)
17:00...News Flash
17:02...Doc...Our World, Their World
17:15...Doc...All the Children
18:00...Magazine...Faut Pas Rever
19:00...The Journal
19:15...Magazine...Sports Et Musique
19:30...News Headlines
19:35...Fresh Prince of Bel-Air
20:00...Auto-Classics
20:30...The Album Show
21:10...Doc...Hold Up the Sun
22:00...News in English
22:25...Drama...Cover
23:15...Miami Vice
23:59...Yes, Minister

PRAYER TIMES

04:56...Fajr
06:18...Sunrise/Duha
11:27...Dhuhr
14:13...Asr
16:36...Maghreb
17:58...Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swefield, Tel. 810740
Anglicans of God Church Tel.
632785.

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440.

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366

Anglican Church Tel. 652826.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel.
771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church
Tel. 775261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 77(751).

Amman International Church
Tel. 827126

Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tel. 824328.

German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel.
664932.

Church of Nazareth Tel.
675691.

The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel.
614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department
of Meteorology

Under the effect of unstable wet
air mass, skies will be cloudy to
partly cloudy with a chance for
thunder rain and winds easterly to
southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba,
skies will be partly cloudy with a
chance for showers and winds

northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min/Max temp. 09/16

Amman 12/22

Aqaba 12/22

Deserts 07/18

Jordan Valley 14/28

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 16, Aqaba 22 Humidity

readings: Amman 70 per cent.

Aqaba 50 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Bahjat Bader 832642

Dr. Nasser Ibrahim 830432

Dr. Wafiq Qaddumi 893542

Dr. Yahya Abdul Rahim 736072

Firas pharmacy 66(912)

Ferdous pharmacy 778336

Al Asema pharmacy 637055

Nairook pharmacy 623672

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Najib pharmacy 847632

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Black Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Dept. 630321

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water & Sewerage Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone 623101

Repairs 661101

Abdali Tel. Repairs 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

J. Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Co. 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Munshir Hospital 6672279

The Islamic, Abdali 66612637

Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3

Al-Bashir 891611/5

Army, Marka 891611/5

Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital 674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)883323

Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital... (09)986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)175555

18:10...Athens (RJ)

19:40...Frankfurt (RJ)

19:40...Tunis (RJ)

19:45...Vienna (RJ)

19:45...Rome (RJ)

00:10...Cairo (RJ)

02:30...Jeddah (add) (RJ)

03:45...Sanaa (add) (RJ)

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

08:15...Bombay (RJ)

08:35...Jeddah (RJ)

08:50...Larnaca (RJ)

09:15...Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)

09:50...Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

09:55...Jeddah, Aqaba (RJ)

10:05...Beirut (RJ)

10:15...Doha, Bahrain (RJ)

Jordan attempts to cope with serious water shortage

By George S. Hishmeh
U.S. Information Agency

KHIRBET AS-SAMRA, Jordan — Migratory birds plowing the flyways of Jordan from the colder regions of Russia to the warmer climes of Lake Victoria in Africa are desperate for a resting stop here, especially after water-parched Jordanians unwittingly pumped dry the nearby Azraq Oasis.

Their only recourse is the 35 so-called stabilisation ponds that collect the wastewaters of Amman and three nearby towns and render them fit for agricultural use, the fourth largest in the world.

Ducks are seen by a visitor swimming serenely in the ponds of near-treated water, where tens of Jordanian farmers are also illegally siphoning the unsanitary waters to their small farms straddling open canal to the King Abdullah Dam despite repeated raids by Jordanian troops.

The significance of the Wadi Musa area is that it is home for the prized Petra ruins which are nowadays attracting a growing number of international tourists, especially Israelis, after the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty in October 1994.

Although the number of visitors from neighbouring Israel has dropped this year after the election of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the existing water supply system in Wadi Musa is, in the opinion of national and international experts, inadequate and unable to serve this growing demand.

More importantly, the region does not have a municipal wastewater system to collect and treat the wastewater in Petra and the neighbouring areas — a fact that could damage the archaeological treasures there.

Since 1993, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has granted Jordan about \$42 million covering several projects, bringing the total of U.S. assistance in the water sector to over \$212 million over the past two decades.

USAID says its overall objective here is "to improve the quality of water in general, to enhance the efficient use and conservation of scarce water resources available, to promote the efficient recycling of wastewater to be reused

in agricultural and industrial sectors; to reduce industrial pollution of water; and to increase public awareness regarding the problems of water scarcity and conservation."

The latest grant agreement, signed last September, will provide Jordan with \$7.2 million for the construction of much-needed wastewater treatment facilities in the country, particularly at Wadi Musa.

Besides USAID, the World Bank is another serious player in this resource management challenge. The World Bank reported recently that renewable water supply per capita in Jordan is among the lowest in the world, only one half that of Syria or Israel, and one fifth that of Egypt.

According to the USAID-Jordan agreement, the lack of water — "the most critical natural resource" here — "portends a national catastrophe in Jordan within the decade."

Virtually all natural sources of fresh water have been tapped. The country's total water supply was estimated at 955 million cubic metres in 1991, and the demand for water is expected to reach 1.6 billion cubic metres in the next four years. To date, the deficit is being met by over-pumping of aquifers.

Water scarcity in Jordan, a country of about four million, is exacerbated by rapid population growth as was the case when over 300,000 Jordanians or nearly 10 per cent of the population returned home from Kuwait in the wake of the 1991 Gulf war. Other contributing factors, according to U.S. and Jordanian officials, are "inefficient water management and use, lack of adequate wastewater treatment capacity and inappropriate pricing policies."

Large-scale desalination is not an economic option for Jordan and the only intermediate alternative for reducing the gap between water demand and supply, according to these officials, is "improved management of existing water resources, and improved quality of treated wastewater for reuse."

In the long run, another alternative is for Jordan to reach agreement with other nations in the region — Turkey and Israel — on the allocation of existing resources as well as the initiation of regional water projects.

Industrial pollution prevention and control will result in improved industrial water practices such as water recycling. It is also hoped that a major public awareness campaign, funded by USAID and being mounted in cooperation with the Jordanian government and non-governmental organisations and women's groups, will result in more efficient use and conservation of water.

In the opinion of World Bank officials, crop substitution away from water-demanding crops such as fruit, wheat, and barley would substantially lessen water use and create an economically more efficient agriculture sector.

The World Bank has given Jordan \$80 million to help offset some of the transition costs of reform, including the removal of price controls and subsidies

for farm products, and the liberalisation of trade that will encourage expansion into export markets.

The As-Samra wastewater facility here, about 40 kilometres from Amman, has been working beyond its capacity, treating more than 170,000 cubic metres daily although it was designed to handle only 68,000 cubic metres of wastewater a day.

This was one factor that prompted the need for the emergency short-term improvements undertaken by Camp Dresser & McKee, an American firm with vast experience in this field, including similar operations in Egypt and the West Bank.

According to McDonnell, the firm's representative, these ponds, with two million square metres of water surface, have not had any maintenance since they were built in 1985. Over 600,000 cubic metres of sludge have accumulated over the past eight to nine years.

McDonnell's firm expects to complete the \$10 million project in the early months of next year. Their contract includes, among other things, the removal of the nitrogen-rich sludge, which is also being used as a fertiliser in nearby experimental farms, and the building of door control facilities, much to the satisfaction of the neighbouring villages.

Although the current project is a "short-term" fix, says McDonnell, it is expected that this natural wastewater treatment facility will function for many years.

He, however, stressed the need for regular maintenance, describing it as the "key to the future life expectancy of the As-Samra wastewater plant."

After the emergency improvement, the As-Samra operation, a natural process, will be capable of recycling 150,000 cubic metres of the 170,000 cubic metres of wastewater that flow here daily from Amman and the neighbouring towns. The water, explained McDonnell, is suitable for farming but not drinking unless it is treated further.

But the threatening situation in Wadi Musa is of a different nature: it has the potential of damaging Petra, Jordan's premier cultural attraction.

The anticipation of large numbers of tourists has led the Jordanian authorities to authorise the building of 14 new hotels in that area which, at present, lacks suitable water supply sources and wastewater treatment plants.

The projected facilities at Wadi Musa, four water supply and four wastewater operations, have been designed to meet the needs of this area up to the year 2020 and will cost about \$32 million.

About 70 per cent of the country's population, it is estimated, will be affected by these ongoing USAID-funded projects and more than 3,000 farm households stand to gain from the improved water treatment facilities at As-Samra and the soon-to-be established networks at Wadi Musa.

Suspects in Ajloun case claim mines intended for self-protection

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Three defendants accused of plotting subversion Saturday told the State Security Court that the landmines they collected in 1995 were intended to protect themselves in case of an Israeli invasion.

Ikremah Mahmoud, 28, Youssef Ahmad, 27, and Ali Mahmoud, 27, said they stocked the explosives to use them in case of an Israeli attack and had no intention whatsoever to use them to terrorise any Jordanian or foreign resident.

The three are formally charged by the military prosecutor with plotting to carry out extremist attacks, and possessing illegal explosives with illicit intent.

"We are indeed guilty of illegal possession of explosives but we assure the court that our intentions were to protect our country," the three defendants said in their three-page defence statement.

According to the prosecution charge sheet, the three men collected landmines

from an Ajloun field in November of 1995 and planned to target visiting Israeli tourists in the area.

The three were apprehended by authorities before any attack took place.

In October, the three defendants entered a plea of guilty for possession of explosives, but told the court that they were neither guilty of charges of illicit intent nor the charges of planning to carry out extremist attacks.

That they entered a guilty plea in October, according to the defence attorneys, was intended for reasons of sentence reduction.

If convicted of charges of possessing illegal arms with illicit intent, they could receive the death penalty.

Defence Attorney Hani Zahid, asked the court to give him time to prepare his defence arguments and to subpoena defence witnesses.

The military tribunal was comprised of Justices, Youssef Faouri, Na'el Masadeh and Ahmad Ayash and set Dec. 16 to resume the trial.

Iraqi minister arrives today for trade talks

AMMAN (J.T.) — Iraqi Minister of Trade Mohammad Mahdi Saleh arrives in Amman today for talks with government and chambers of industry and trade officials dealing with bilateral economic and trade issues. Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI) sources said Saturday.

Dr. Saleh is scheduled to meet Sunday evening with AIC Chairman Khaldoun Abu Hassan and board members as well as several industrialists and businessmen, the chamber said.

On the agenda is the question of increasing Jordanian exports to Iraq when the food-for-oil agreement between Iraq and the U.N. is implemented. Following the meeting with Mr. Abu Hassan, the Iraqi minister is expected to meet the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce President Haidar Murad and board members to discuss trade exchanges, according to the sources.

Dr. Saleh met last week with Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti during a visit to Jordan saying he would return for more talks. At that time he stressed that his country was planning to use Aqaba for its imports of food and medicine under a deal stipulated by the U.N.

Chamber of Industry sources said Dr. Saleh was certain to discuss the expansion

of the Jordanian-Iraqi trade protocol for 1997.

Jordan reduced the volume of the protocol from \$400 million in 1995 to \$220 million in 1996, saying the measure was taken because Iraq could no longer afford tapping its own foreign exchange reserves to pay for the goods.

Minister of Information Marwan Muasher last week said the volume of the trade protocol would not be increased in 1997 but explained that the government was encouraging the private sector to increase its exports to Iraq outside the protocol.

Reports say Iraq owes Jordan more than \$1.2 billion in accumulated debts since 1990 when Iraqi oil exports were banned under the U.N. sanctions imposed on the republic after its invasion of Kuwait.

The chamber said the coming meeting with Dr. Saleh is significant as it precedes by a few days the start of Iraqi exports of \$2 billion in oil every six months to purchase basic foods and medicines for its citizens.

After Dr. Saleh's visit here, Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hashem Dabbas and Minister of Finance Marwan Awad are expected to visit to Baghdad for additional talks on economic ties.

Metre, rhyme, sound, sense and an innate need for the 'Macarena'

By Christina Schlegel
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The popular hit "Macarena" seems to serve our primitive instincts, Nicholas Linfield Tuesday told the Jordan Times as an explanation of how metres, or regulated rhythms, induce pleasurable sensations in the human body.

Within the framework of his Monday lecture entitled "Small Questions, Large Answers: An Approach to Poetry," Dr. Linfield revealed the mystery of metres and their impact on our senses.

As part of the British Council series labelled "Enjoying Literature," already in its third year, this lecture was directed towards school teachers in order to familiarise them with methods of poetry instruction.

"This was the first time that teachers asked for a certain lecture," Dr. Linfield said.

He stated that he was approached two weeks ago by several teachers who were having difficulties describing poetry metres to their students.

"The teachers specifically requested an explanation of metre, sound and meaning — the main components of a poem," he stated.

Dr. Linfield then advised lectures participants to teach poetry by asking small rather than large questions.

"Large questions like 'what does the poem mean?' he explained, can stress students. Small ones will give them confidence to contribute statements and thus motivate and spark their interest for literature and poetry."

"You cannot teach literature if you do not enjoy it. And if you do, you may wonder what is the best way to teach it," Dr. Linfield stated in his introduction.

He quoted poet Philip Larkin's statement that "Writing poetry is playing off the natural rhythms and word-order of speech against the artificialities of metre and rhyme."

Dr. Linfield, who explained his methods with the help of various poems, declared that metres, often striking in children rhymes, are experienced by the human body

as a pleasant feeling and satisfy a need for regular sequence.

"We all have a desperate need for order and chaos at the same time, both of which can be satisfied by poetry," he explained.

As an example, Dr. Linfield cited a child's rapture in listening to regular rhythms.

The delight is intensified, he explicated, if the beat is suddenly interrupted and then continued.

The child will be very pleased at the experience of regular rhythms, sudden suspense and then return, he stated.

"The best example might be the popular song 'Macarena', which uses a consistent beat, is abruptly interrupted by a high-voiced 'Hey, Macarena' and then returns to its regular pattern," Dr. Linfield said in an interview with the Jordan Times.

He added that the song's success, following a similar pattern to many childhood tunes, implies the experience of primitive delight.

"We are reassured that the rhythm will go back to its continuity," Dr. Linfield said by way of explanation of an almost innate pleasure.

"A good poem has a basic rhythm and plays with it to stress certain syllables," Dr. Linfield continued.

Analysing another substantial component of poetry, he stressed the importance of sound and sense in a poem.

"The sound of words is used to express a certain mood, therefore a good poet will slow down the line with stressed syllables if the meaning demands it," Dr. Linfield explained.

Sounds, he continued, have no fixed meaning, a good poem gives you the definition. Sound, metre and rhythm together embody the sense, the sound is the echo, Dr. Linfield concluded his lecture.

The British Council series is supported by the Ministry of Education which encourages teacher participation.

Dr. Linfield is currently teaching at the Jordan University for Women and will continue this series of lectures with "The Child in English Literature," scheduled to be held on Dec. 16.

What's Going On

CHRISTMAS CHOIR

Performance by the Amman Community Choir Band of the Young Women's Christian Association at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

CHRISTMAS SALE/BAZAAR

Christmas sale and slide show at the International Community School, Khaldiya, 6-8 p.m. (It is sponsored by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature with proceeds going to protect the Dana wildlife. The sale includes hand-crafted silver jewellery, organically-grown dried fruit, original Dana pottery, Christmas cards, and souvenir postcards).

* Charity Christmas bazaar, sponsored by the

Lions Club, at Al Hussein Sports City, the Amman hall (10:00 a.m. till the rest of the day).

CHRISTMAS SHOW

* Special show and sale of Christmas crafts at the Jordan Crafts Centre (Alaydi), Jabal Amman, Second Circle (Tel. 644555), until Dec. 31.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

* Roundtable discussion with the press entitled "Judicial and Legal Guarantees for Human Rights" with the participation of Dr. Nuhman Brown at the American Centre, Abdoun on Monday, Dec. 9 (10:00 a.m. — 12:00 noon).

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Belgrade is set for more protests as Washington steps up pressure

BELGRADE (AFP) — Washington was stepping up pressure on Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic to accept elections won by the opposition as both sides in Serbia seemed to be looking for a way to end the crisis.

Over 100,000 people attended an 18th day of protest Friday over the authorities' refusal to accept the results of local elections, which saw the opposition Together Coalition making sweeping gains, winning 15 out of 18 cities and towns.

On Saturday, one of the coalition's leaders seemed to be offering the Serbian president, who has kept a low profile since the protests started, a way out without losing face.

"We must not overestimate Milosevic's responsibility," Dusan Mihajlovic, leader of New Democracy, one of the parties in the coalition, said in an interview with the daily Dnevni Telegraph.

"The greatest responsibility lies with the Socialist organisations in Belgrade. I know for a fact that officials in these organisations did all

they could to transform their defeat into a victory ... and that Milosevic had nothing to do with it," he said.

However, he added that the will of the electorate must be respected, and another opposition spokesman warned "we don't want to fall into Slobodan Milosevic's usual snares."

Serbia has been under intense international pressure to back down, and Washington Friday stepped up its efforts to persuade the authorities to respect the election results.

In a letter, U.S. President Bill Clinton announced he had decided to extend for a year a freeze on the financial assets on U.S. soil of the governments of Serbia, Montenegro and the Bosnian Serb entity.

And a strong statement from the State Department urged Mr. Milosevic to reverse the decision to partially cancel the results of the polls.

"The United States believes that the Milosevic government should now take the step of reversing its

decision. It should now take a solid step of respecting the municipal elections of Nov. 17," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

"The Serbian government should initiate an open dialogue with the opposition in Serbia," he said.

White House spokesman Michael McCurry declined to comment on the Serbian opposition's setting up a shadow government, which was announced at Friday's rally by Vuk Draskovic, one of Together's leaders.

"We have already organised a democratic government of new Serbia and formed a state council which would take over his duties and schedule new elections," Mr. Draskovic said.

"Milosevic must firstly recognise the electoral victory of the people and free the media so that we can put an end to these protests," he said.

At the rally, for the second day running, demonstrators brandished an effigy of Mr. Milosevic in prison garb bearing the number

17111996 — referring to the date of the elections.

Friday's rally came despite the government's apparent attempt to defuse the crisis by allowing back on the air two independent radio stations it had ordered shut down earlier in the week.

But the most encouraging sign that almost three weeks of sustained mass protest was paying off, came from within the Milosevic government, when Information Minister Aleksandar Tizjanic resigned and then turned on his former bosses for muzzling the media.

The Serbian government has made other concessions such as cutting electricity prices and paying arrears in student grants and pensions, designed to divert popular support for the protests.

Despite the protests, a poll published Saturday said Mr. Milosevic was still the most popular politician in Serbia, with 16.5 per cent of the vote, ahead of Zoran Djindjic, one of Together's leaders, with 10 per cent.

However, 62.5 per cent of those polled did not trust any politicians.



Belgrade student waves with Serbian flag during a protest march against Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade Friday. The Serbian Supreme Court Friday heard an appeal by opposition parties against Socialist election-rigging that has triggered huge popular protest against President Milosevic (Reuters photo)

Bosnian parliament cancels session to ratify government

SARAJEVO (AFP) — A parliamentary session called to ratify the new governing council of ministers was postponed Saturday, once again leaving Bosnia without a government.

No reason was given for the postponement of the joint assembly, elected by Bosnia's Croats, Muslims and Serbs in internationally supervised elections in September.

But there was lingering controversy over the composition of the council of ministers, a complex arrangement in which each

official post has three members, one each from Bosnia's three communities.

Negotiations to form the council of ministers had dragged on for more than a month before Bosnia's joint presidency agreed terms a week ago.

The council of ministers needs to be formally ratified by the joint parliament before it can come into existence.

Argument about the council's structure and nominees continued Saturday.

Centres on whether Bosnia should have power at

the centre, in the cumbersome central government, or whether power should be devolved to Bosnia's two entities, the Serb Republic and the Federation of Croats and Muslims.

The federation has called for greater powers for the central government, while the Serbs insist on it having only limited powers.

The present council has three ministries: Foreign affairs, foreign trade and civil affairs and communications.

No date has been set for the postponed session to be reconvened.

Major's survival to May U.K. election date in doubt

LONDON (R) — British Prime Minister John Major's chances of surviving in power until a May deadline for national elections was thrown into doubt Saturday as his Conservative government faced an era of minority rule beset by threats of further defections.

Ending what political commentators saw as the worst week for Mr. Major since he became leader in 1990, the government saw its one-seat majority in parliament effectively wiped out when Conservative MP Sir John Goss withdrew his support Friday in protest over a hospital closure in his constituency.

Another Conservative, Hugh Dykes, warned he was ready to follow suit over the same issue and a third, Terry Dicks, threatened to quit unless Mr. Major ruled out Britain joining a single European currency.

"Time and hope are running out for John Major's administration," said the influential Financial Times in an editorial.

"It no longer seems quite so certain that Mr. Major will be able to go to the

country at the time of his choosing next May," the newspaper added.

All eyes will be on Mr. Major Sunday when he gives a crucial interview on BBC Television in a bid to calm nerves and make yet another appeal for unity.

Mr. Major, whose conservatives are some 20 points behind the opposition Labour Party in opinion polls, has said repeatedly that he wants to stay in office until the May deadline for elections.

But with the issue of European integration still causing bitter rifts within the Conservatives he faces an uphill battle.

A by-election Thursday in a Labour stronghold of northern England is expected to seal the government's status as a minority administration for the first time since 1979.

Cabinet ministers went on national radio Saturday to defend again Mr. Major's stance on a European single currency — the issue that sparked reports this week that Finance Minister Kenneth Clarke had threatened to resign.

Conservative "Euro-scep-

tics" want Mr. Major to rule out British entry into a single currency during the next parliament, a move opposed by Mr. Clarke who wants Britain to retain its "wait-and-see" policy.

The Labour Party was holding fire over if and when it would call a vote of confidence that would precipitate the election. But leader Tony Blair said the government was "disintegrating before our eyes."

"This shambles cannot go on any longer and the sooner we get the chance to put them out of their misery the better," Mr. Blair said.

The last Labour government clung on for two years before 1979 by doing deals with minor parties after losing its overall majority. Mr. Major's Conservatives are now at the mercy of the nine-strong Ulster Unionist MP's from Northern Ireland, who usually tend to vote with the government.

But the Ulster Unionists, who staunchly support British rule of Northern Ireland, have warned ministers they cannot take that support for granted and will judge each issue on its merits.

Violence erupts as Indian politician jailed on corruption charges

MADRAS, India (AFP) — A high-profile Indian movie actress-turned-politician was jailed here Saturday on charges of corruption, sparking sporadic violence and widespread protests.

Jayalalitha Jayaram, a former chief minister of the southern state of Tamil Nadu, was ordered to be held in Madras Central Jail until she appears in court on Dec. 21.

Ms. Jayalalitha, dubbed by critics as India's Imelda Marcos, was arrested earlier Saturday at her heavily-guarded house here on charges of involvement in a \$2.4 million fraud.

The 48-year-old politician was driven in a police van to the police commissioner's office and later to the home of principal sessions Judge A. Ramamurthy, who ordered she be held in prison.

The news of her arrest and jailing spread like wildfire across Tamil Nadu, a coastal state of 55 million people, triggering sporadic vio-

lence and widespread protests by her supporters.

More than 400 members of Ms. Jayalalitha's ethnic-Tamil Aiamk Party were arrested as they took to the streets of major towns to denounce her arrest, domestic news agencies said.

Aiamk activists squatted on a busy road in the temple town of Madurai, disrupting traffic. A state-run bus was set on fire at Valayankulam town, and several buses were stoned elsewhere.

At Karur, her constituency, Ms. Jayalalitha's supporters threw rocks at passing vehicles and set up road blocks, paralyzing traffic. Many shops closed down amid tension in Madras, the state capital.

"We are expecting a lot of trouble," a police officer told AFP.

Mr. Jayalalitha, who was chief minister of Tamil Nadu for five years until May, called her arrest a vendetta by the state government, which is controlled by a rival Tamil party.

"It is political victimisation and nothing else," a defiant Ms. Jayalalitha, surrounded by hordes of nationalists and police, told reporters before appearing before Judge Ramamurthy.

The convent-educated Jayalalitha, who always wears a bulletproof vest for public engagements, has been accused of siphoning away millions of dollars with the help of a woman confidant who was jailed earlier.

At least six cases of corruption have been filed against Ms. Jayalalitha.

Saturday's arrest follows charges that she allegedly made \$4.2 million in a purchase of 45,302 colour television sets for villages in July 1995. She has denied the charges.

There was high drama as a team of police officers drove to her residence to arrest her. A large number of policemen were deployed in the area to thwart violent interference by her supporters.

Grozny airport reopens to civilian flights

MOSCOW (R) — A civilian airliner landed at the main airport in the capital of breakaway Chechnya Friday, the first since Russia's decision to pull out its troops last August.

Russia's commercial NTV television boarded the TU-134's flight from Moscow to Grozny. "It is a historic day," the commentator said, adding that the city's Severnyy Airport had been renamed after a Chechen independence hero.

The airport in Grozny had been closed to civilian flights for months while Chechen rebels battled with soldiers sent there by Moscow to crush the Caucasus region's independence bid.

But an August agreement brought 21 months of fighting to an end and Russian President Boris Yeltsin said last month he would withdraw the Russian troops, many of whom have been based at the airport, by January.

NTV said the small passenger plane, operated by Donavia, nearly had to seek another landing site when the pilots could not make radio communication with the Chechen airport.

NTV said power supplies at the airport were switched on just as the plane landed.

Interfax News Agency quoted a senior airline official as saying that the airline planned seven flights a week between Moscow and Grozny. Meanwhile, a controversial business tycoon who has joined Russia's efforts to end fighting in rebel Chechnya said Friday that Moscow, appeared finally to have won the trust of the rebel leaders.

Boris Berezovsky, who completed his rise from car dealer to Kremlin politician in October, indicated after his latest mission to Chechnya that the chances of a lasting peace were better than at any time since the conflict flared two years ago.

"I feel that the Chechen leaders now have much more trust in Russia and the federal government, and it already helps us a lot," Mr. Berezovsky, 50, told Reuters in an interview.

Mr. Berezovsky, the deputy secretary of President Boris Yeltsin's influential Security Council, struck an optimistic note one day after returning from Chechnya.

He said the trip, accompanying Security Council Secretary Ivan Rybkin, had been crowned by the opening of Grozny's airport for the first regular civilian flights for months and the installation of a satellite telephone system.

"I think that in a very short time, every citizen of Chechnya will feel the result of the peace process in his home," Mr. Berezovsky said.

The many people made homeless in almost 21 months of fighting are less optimistic. Despite a peace deal signed on Aug. 31, they remain bitter after the deaths of tens of thousands of people, most of them civilians.

Russian bombing raids have destroyed many buildings, road and rail links are badly in need of repair and reconstruction work has hardly even begun.

Mr. Berezovsky said the Russian government had made many mistakes during the fighting.

But he defended Mr. Yeltsin and suggested the reason for the separatists' new trust was the president's announcement last month that he was withdrawing the last of the troops which he sent to the mountainous southern region on Dec. 11, 1994.

"For the first time, this was a step which was not taken under pressure," Mr. Berezovsky said.

Logjam broken in race for U.N. secretary-general

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Four African candidates were nominated Friday for the post of U.N. secretary-general, thereby breaking a deadlock after Boutros Ghali temporarily put aside his bid for reelection.

Italian Ambassador Paolo Fulci said the nominees were:

— Kofi Annan of Ghana, the U.N. undersecretary-general for peacekeeping, who has held a variety of top-level U.N. posts.

— Ahmedou Ould Abdallah of Mauritania, the former U.N. special representative for Burundi who is co-chairman of the Global Coalition for Africa group in Washington.

— Hamid Algabid of Niger, the secretary-general of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference.

— Amara Essy of the Ivory Coast, its foreign minister and the U.N. General Assembly president in 1994-95, who recently brokered a peace agreement ending five years of civil war in Sierra Leone.

The Council will decide Monday when they will take an informal poll to see

how much support the candidates have.

The move by the African states means the Council could begin voting on candidates next week, a procedure that could either result in a decision or turn into a bitter fight with vetoes against each nominee.

By then diplomats said other names would probably emerge, including Salim A. Salim of Tanzania, the secretary-general of the Organisation of African Unity, and possibly Olara Otunnu, the president of the New York-based International Peace Academy, as well as Senegal's Foreign Minister Moustapha Niasse, said to be in New York for the purpose.

Also mentioned as possible candidate was Wally N'dow of Gambia, an assistant secretary-general in charge of the Centre for Human Settlements in Nairobi.

All four names were put in letters to Mr. Fulci, who met ambassadors from the four nations involved as well as Jerome Mendougu, Cameroon's ambassador to the United States. Cameroon holds the presidency of

the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

Both Senegal and Gambia this year sponsored General Assembly resolution backing U.N. membership for Taiwan, making them liable to a veto from China, which considers Taiwan a renegade province.

Dr. Ghali's five-year term expires on Dec. 31.

On Wednesday he opened the door for other Africans to contest his job by saying he was suspending temporarily his candidacy but was not withdrawing completely from the race.

The United States on Nov. 19 vetoed his bid for reelection while the other 14 Security Council members supported him. In July he received the backing of the Organisation of African Unity.

U.S. officials maintain he has not reformed the organisation but most diplomats believe the Clinton administration was bowing to pressure from Republicans in Congress, many of whom are opposed to the United Nations on philosophical grounds.

There were no other reports of casualties in Tamil Nadu or neighbouring Andhra Pradesh state.

Madras Airport reopened Friday night after shutting down briefly because of heavy rain.

"It's bright sunshine now. Flights are back to normal," an airport manager said Saturday.

The Press Trust of India news agency, quoting Tamil Nadu's most senior civil servant K.A. Nambiar, said the cyclone ripped up trees and blew over hoardings and billboards but caused no other damage.

The cyclone hit Pondicherry and South Arcot district, 162 kilometres south of Madras Friday evening, but there were no reports of any casualties, police officials said.

When the storm crossed land, winds reached 100 kph but quickly weakened. "We had moderate rain," said T.S. Ravichandran, police chief at Cuddalore, a town in the coastal South Arcot district. "It's drizzling now."

The cyclone had earlier threatened to cross land near the port town of Machilipatnam in Andhra Pradesh Wednesday. But it moved south and weakened by Thursday.

Officials in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu said there were no immediate reports on damage to crops.

Last month, at least 2,000 people were killed or missing after a storm swept through the east and west Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh state.

1 person dies in India cyclone

HYDERABAD, India (R) — A cyclone that hit India's southeastern coast Friday killed one person but caused no major damage and was quickly weakening, meteorologists and officials said.

"The cyclone has now weakened into a low depression," J.V.M. Naidu, director of the Cyclone Warning Centre at Vishakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh state, said Saturday.

"It has a maximum wind speed of 20 kilometres per hour. We do not expect any tidal waves," he told Reuters by telephone from the port city.

Another meteorological official said the depression was likely to move west causing rains in the southern states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala.

Police officials in Madras, capital of Tamil Nadu state, told Reuters that one person was killed in the city Friday night when a tree fell on his car.

There were no other reports of casualties in Tamil Nadu or neighbouring Andhra Pradesh state.

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Half of dog bites provoked — American vet

CHICAGO (R) — As many as 1 million dog bites are recorded in the United States every year and half of them are provoked by humans, a veterinarian has told fellow animal doctors.

The Humane Society of the United States estimates that between 500,000 and one million bites are delivered by dogs each year, more than half of which are suffered by children.

"Most bites can be prevented by teaching children how to respect a dog," Michael Cornwell of the Glen-

coe Animal Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, told the annual meeting of the American Veterinary Medical Association.

"Let's not let our kids jump on them or crawl on them. Dogs and children don't have to have an interaction. Let's respect their territories," he said.

Dr. Cornwell said 50 per cent of reported bites were provoked by a person and 60 per cent were suffered by children. He also estimated

that only 25 per cent of bites were reported because medical attention was not needed.

Don Rieck, president of the National Animal Control Association, said aggressiveness in dogs was related more to gender than breed and a male dog that had not been neutered was three times more likely to bite than an unspayed female.

The five breeds credited with the most incidents were chow chows, Rottweilers, German shepherds, cocker spaniels and Dalmatians.

December 8, 1996
Grozny
airport
reopens
to civilian
flights
SCOW (R) — A
airliner landed at
airport in the
breakaway Chech-
nia, the first in
its decision to
allow flights to
the region's
capital, Grozny.
The flight was
made by a Tu-134
from Moscow.
The airline, the
Severyan Airline,
was renamed after
the independence
of the region.
The airport had
been closed for
months after
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Rescue workers with sniffer dogs search for survivors at the mountain village of Otani, central Japan, near one of the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics skiing slopes Saturday. A mudslide tore through a steep river valley Friday morning after rains melted heavy snow that had accumulated upstream last week, killing seven people, injuring eight and leaving another seven missing (Reuters photo)

Japan mudslide claims 6 lives; 8 more feared dead

TOKYO (AFP) — Rescue workers recovered the bodies of at least six people engulfed by mudslides at construction sites in mountainous central Japan, while another eight are missing and feared dead, police said.

One body was found as far as 800 metres away from where the person had been working, raising fears that those missing may have been carried long distances by the flood of earth, a police spokesman said.

Rescue work continued at a snail's pace, as minor slides had occasionally suspended operations, he said.

"Police helicopters are hovering above the accident site to watch for signs of secondary disasters," the spokesman said.

Rescue workers dug through the night and into the day in freezing conditions following mudslides at two construction sites near the village of Otani in Nagano Prefecture mid-morning Friday.

The police spokesman said the bodies of five men and one woman had been recovered.

Still missing were eight people from the sites, located in the snow-covered Hime River Valley on the National Highway 220 kilometres northwest of Tokyo.

An estimated 100,000 cubic metres of mud, sand and rock hurled the two sites, leaving 46 survivors stranded until Friday night.

The site of the accident is about 18 kilometres distant and in the same valley as Hakuba village, where the Nordic skiing, downhill skiing and ski-jump events of next year's Nagano Winter Olympic Games are scheduled to be held.

Norihiko Iijima, information officer for the Nagano Olympic Committee, said: "The ground conditions at Hakuba are quite different from Otani."

"Nobody is worried about something like this happening to the games," he said.

The police spokesman said eight people were also injured in the slides, adding they were taken to a nearby hospital to be treated for unspecified injuries.

Police said one mudslide hit the site of a dam and bridge project, burying 11 people, while another struck about one kilometre away, where workers were repairing a retaining wall damaged during heavy rains in July last year, engulfing three women.

"I heard a big bang and they were swept away by the mudslide in less than a second," one worker who escaped the accident was quoted as saying by the Kyodo News Agency.

Reports from the area said the mudslides were 100 metres wide and 20 metres deep. Television footage showed toppled cranes, twisted metal and hurled trucks in a sea of mud and rock.

Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto ordered the military Friday to send troops to assist local police and fire fighters with rescue efforts.

The police spokesman said 1,390 rescue workers, including about 200 soldiers, were Saturday digging through debris in freezing temperatures.

Dogs were also brought in to help with the search for survivors or bodies, reports said.

The spokesman said rescue work was halted at one stage for nearly two hours because of fears of further mudslides.

The uncle of 35-year-old Yasukatsu Kodama, one of those killed, told Jiji Press: "I was worried because Yasukatsu often used to say this was a dangerous place."

Hideaki Marui, a professor at Niigata University and one of two experts dispatched to the scene, told National Television that mud left over from last year's heavy rains had been "in an unstable position where a large amount of water could trigger a mudslide."

Police said the area had been blanketed by heavy snow Wednesday, then drenched with heavy rains Thursday.

Construction Ministry officials were quoted by Japanese media as saying no mudslide warnings had been issued for the area, as the level of precipitation had not reached the alert level.

Algeria's new constitution signed into law

Paris (R) — Algerian President Liamine Zeroual Sunday signed into law constitutional reforms which ban political parties based on religion or language and aim to help end five years of bloodshed.

The official Algerian News Agency (APS), quoting a statement from the presidency, said Mr. Zeroual signed the decree to promulgate the reforms approved in a referendum last month.

The main changes extend the president's powers, allow political parties but ban those based on religion and language, limit the president to two five-year terms, and confirm Islam as the state religion.

Mr. Zeroual acted one day after Algerian security forces said "a group of terrorists" — Algerian official language for Muslim fundamentalists — had killed 19 people in a night raid on an isolated community in Bida province, south of the capital.

The attack was the second in two nights, and brought to 29 the number of civilians killed in the latest upsurge of violence. The security forces' terminology indicated the civilians had died by having their throats cut.

About 60,000 people have been killed in Algeria's conflict which erupted after the January 1992 cancellation of a general election in which Islamic fundamentalists had taken a commanding lead.

Mr. Zeroual, appointed head of state in January 1994 and elected as president in November 1995 in Algeria's first multi-candidate presidential poll, has promised a general election will be held early next year.

Early this week, Mr. Zeroual told judges at the opening of the judicial year: "In approving the constitutional revision project...the Algerian people have reaffirmed their own convictions towards all those who doubt their capacity and determination to overcome the crisis."

Official results for the referendum showed turnout at 79.78 per cent of the 16.4 million registered voters. Some 10.7 million, or 84.60 per cent, approved the changed constitution.

Algerian authorities said the referendum, under tight security, was free of violence. Independent newspapers said at least 26 people died in bombings and other attacks.

Since early November, despite tight censorship in Algeria, at least 190 people have been reported killed in the conflict between Algerian security forces and Muslim fundamentalists, according to independent and other sources.

The latest attacks followed a lull in raids on isolated communities since the Nov. 28 referendum.

"Arm us. We cannot defend ourselves with our bare chests," villagers shouted at Solidarity Minister Rabea Mechemene when he visited Ben-Salah village after one November attack.

Algeria's Armed Islamic Group (GIA) is suspected of being responsible for most of the attacks whose ruthlessness has stunned even Algerians injured to violence after five years of conflict in which about 60,000 people have been killed.

The GIA is thought to be behind the latest bomb attack in France this week in which three people were killed and 94 wounded.

Burma says most protestors freed

RANGOON (R) — Burma's military government said most of the 264 protestors held at a demonstration near the University of Yangon (Rangoon) Saturday had been released.

"Most of those held in the 3 a.m. operation have been released by this early afternoon and I would expect all of them to be freed by the end of the day," a spokesman told Reuters. He did not give details of how many people had been freed.

He said the government was still checking the identities of some of those held at the Kyauksan Ground, a former racetrack, in central Rangoon.

Soldiers and riot police rounded up students and other protestors after using water cannon and batons to end an 11-hour street protest in the capital just before dawn, witnesses said.

The crackdown began when troops and police rushed a group of students sitting at a junction near the University of Yangon (Rangoon) who had refused to heed orders to disperse.

On Monday, up to 2,000 students from Yangon University and Yangon Institute of Technology (YIT) held the biggest street demonstration seen in Rangoon since mass pro-democracy uprisings in September 1988.

The 1988 uprising was crushed by the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), leaving many dead and thousands more in jail.

Before troops and police moved in early Saturday, the students were warned to disperse so authorities could sort out the "political agitators" from the protestors, witnesses said.

Fire engines used water cannon for about 20 minutes and police chased some students trying to flee, they added.

Some protestors were struck with batons as they were put into vehicles and taken away.

"We saw students at the centre of the junction being forced by water cannon to crouch face-down to the ground. Some were hit by flying stones," said one witness near the scene.

The students were demanding rights to organise independent unions on campus and as well as freedom for about 80 jailed student leaders.

There has been no official comment on the group of 80 students or when they were being held.

On Friday, the students said the protests were non-political and they had no contact with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi or her National League for Democracy (NLD) party.

Rangoon was calm Saturday with most residents unaware of the pre-dawn crackdown. But truckloads of armed security forces kept watch at several intersections near the university and YIT about six kilometres away.

For a time, witnesses said, a government helicopter hovered over the troubled institute, which was shut for nearly two years following the 1988 uprisings.

Police have blocked roads leading to Ms. Suu Kyi's home since Tuesday.

Uganda claims 3,000 Zaire troops have joined Ugandan guerrillas

KASESE, Uganda (AFP) — At least 3,000 Zairean soldiers have joined up with the Zairean-based Ugandan Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels after being routed by other rebels inside Zaire, Ugandan security sources said here.

The sources said overnight Friday the Zairean soldiers had recently been chased from their bases in Beni, 50 kilometres west of the Ugandan border, by the Zairean Banyamulenge Tutsi rebels, who have been battling with Zairean forces for the control of eastern Zaire.

The Zairean soldiers were now trying to join up with the rebels because they believed Ugandan troops had helped the Banyamulenge take Beni a week ago, a claim Uganda has denied, the sources said.

The ADF — a combination of the fundamentalist Tabligi Muslim sect and remnants of the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) — invaded Uganda on Nov. 13 but were pushed back into Zaire by the Ugandan People's Defence Forces (UPDF) after one week of heavy fighting which left more than 200 rebels and 30 Ugandan troops dead.

They attacked again 11 days ago, but this time the Ugandan army pursued them across the border into Zaire. Many inhabitants on both sides of the border have been forced to flee to safer areas.

On Friday afternoon, on the long road leading from the border, scattered groups of women trudged along, carrying their belongings on their backs.

One woman told AFP she was fleeing her mountain home of Muiusungu which, she said, was attacked by rebels early Friday.

The woman said she had heard gunshots and rocket-propelled grenades and began running when news reached them that their neighbours had been abducted by the rebels.

But the Ugandan military denied knowledge of any rebel attack, although they admitted that there was still a number of rebels, whom they referred to as "thugs," in Uganda's Ruwenzori Mountains — better known as "Mountains of the Moon."

The ADF rebels, who have recently stepped up their abductions of people living near the border, kidnapped six more from a border trading centre, adding to an estimated 400 people they have already seized and taken to their bases inside Zaire since the border war erupted on Nov. 13.

This week alone, 28 abducted Ugandan civilians escaped from captivity and crossed back into Uganda.

"We are careful when we see people crossing into Uganda from Zaire. We watch to see if they have their hands up, to make sure they are not abducted people," a UPDF soldier told AFP.

Meanwhile, the number of Zairean refugees in Kasese district continued to grow.

At the last count, 600 had fled into Kasese to escape the ADF rebels, who are trying to recruit them into their ranks, and Zairean soldiers fleeing from the North Kivu rebels.

The Zairean refugees are currently staying with families and friends, but Kasese's resident district commissioner has warned them to either move to refugee camps further inside Uganda, or return to Zaire.

Sri Lanka military chiefs safe after air scare

COLOMBO (R) — A military helicopter carrying Sri Lanka's deputy defence minister and army chief crash-landed in rebel territory in the country's north Saturday, but both men are safe, a military official said.

The helicopter, with Minister Anura Kumara Ratwatte and army commander Lieutenant-General Rohan Daluwatte, came down in country controlled by the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam north of the town of Vavuniya, about 220 kilometres from the capital Colombo.

"It had crash-landed after experiencing mechanical trouble," the official told Reuters.

Airborne troops rushed to the crash-landing site at remote Pampalmadu, ahead of the army's front-line, and brought the minister and his party to Vavuniya Air Force Base, military officials said.

Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga is the defence minister, but Gen. Ratwatte effectively controls day-to-day operations. He is also irrigation, power and energy minister.

Gen. Ratwatte and Gen. Daluwatte are widely credited with the military's recent victories over the Tigers, including last December's recapture of the rebels' strategic northern stronghold of Jaffna.

Gen. Ratwatte, popular with the troops, has a reputation for frequent visits to battle zones.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Ravinatha Ariyasingha told Reuters the men were safe and had returned to Colombo.

"The deputy defence minister's helicopter made an emergency landing. However, he and all on board are safe. They were flown back to Colombo in the afternoon," he said.

No further details were immediately available.

The Sri Lankan government has been embroiled in an ethnic war since 1983 against Tamil Tiger rebels demanding a separate homeland in the north and east of this predominantly Sinhalese Indian Ocean island.

Taiwan minister leaves S. Africa early

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Taiwan Foreign Minister John Chang left South Africa Friday night, 24 hours earlier than scheduled, Foreign Ministry spokesman Pieter Swanepoel said Saturday.

Mr. Chang, who arrived in the country Tuesday in a bid to persuade Pretoria to go back on its decision to switch recognition from Taipei to Beijing, was seen off at Johannesburg Airport by Alfred Nzo, his South African counterpart, Mr. Swanepoel said.

He added that the Taiwan embassy had said from the start that Mr. Chang might leave Friday.

"We suppose he had finished his itinerary and decided to head off rather than spend a day of leisure in South Africa," Mr. Swanepoel said. "We had nothing official planned for him today (Saturday)."

Mr. Chang had been expected to spend Saturday at Sun City casino resort in north-west province before flying out of Johannesburg in the evening.

Reports out of Taipei said Mr. Chang left South Africa for a neighbouring country to negotiate the establishment of diplomatic ties, but Mr. Swanepoel could not confirm this.

"We have no idea of his travel plans," he said.

Taiwan embassy Press Secretary John Lee confirmed that the foreign minister had left the country Friday but could shed no light on where he had gone.

"To tell you the truth, I have no idea," Mr. Lee said.

The leading Taiwanese daily, China Times Express, quoted unnamed sources as saying Mr. Chang had secretly left for an African country which does not maintain official ties with Taipei.

The sources said Mr. Chang's destination was about four-to-five-hours flying time from South Africa.

The mass-circulation United Evening News also quoted unnamed sources as saying that Mr. Chang could be in Chad or Zambia for talks on possible establishment of formal ties with Taiwan.

Vice Foreign Minister Chen Chien-Jen told reporters in Taipei he had no new information.

"If there was a change in schedule, it should be made by the foreign minister in South Africa," he said.

He said Mr. Chang was scheduled to return to Taipei Sunday, but he could not say for sure whether he would return as scheduled.

While in South Africa, Mr. Chang announced that Taiwan was recalling its ambassador and suspending most of its bilateral cooperation agreements in retaliation for South Africa's decision to cut ties from the end of 1997.

On Friday, however, he urged businesses from his country to remain in South Africa while Taipei and Pretoria negotiated the status of future relations.

Bangui violence spirals; U.N. evacuates

BANGUI (R) — A former cabinet minister in Central African Republic and his son were abducted from home and murdered in growing ethnic violence in the capital Bangui, a government minister said.

With violence spiralling out of control, the United Nations evacuated its staff in Bangui to Ivory Coast Friday. An official from the U.N. refugee agency UNHCR said a chartered plane brought evacuees to Abidjan.

"We are talking of about 80 people from the whole U.N. system," the official added.

Separately, officials in Brazzaville said 300 refugees, some armed, had crossed from Central African Republic into the northern Congolese town of Betou. The Central African Republic district across from Betou is the base of a rebel group opposed to the government in Bangui.

France voiced backing for the elected Bangui government but said its troops based in the former colony under defence pacts would not help it combat soldiers who began a mutiny on Nov. 16.

"France cannot be involved in the domestic political debate," President Jacques Chirac told a news conference at the end of a Franco-African summit in Burkina Faso.

French troops may only take part in maintaining order to avoid major abuses and protect foreign communities," he said.

Public Service Minister David Dofara, head of the National Red Cross, told Reuters he had seen the bodies of former Interior Minister Christophe Grellombe and his son, who was not named.

Witnesses said they had been seized by troops loyal to Mr. Patasse at dawn Thursday from their home close to the presidential palace, which is guarded by loyalist soldiers backed by French troops based in Bangui.

The bodies were found Thursday in an open field about two kilometres further away, said Mr. Dofara and other witnesses.

Shuttle ends problematic voyage

CAPE CANAVERA, Florida (AFP) — The U.S. space shuttle Columbia ended a problem-plagued mission Saturday, landing here after setting a flight duration record for the orbiter programme.

The shuttle touched down at 6:49 a.m. (11:49 GMT), logging 17 days, 15 hours and 53 minutes aloft. The flight topped by roughly a day the previous shuttle record of 16 days, 21 hours and 48 minutes.

Clouds and foggy weather at the southern landing site forced the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to delay Columbia's landing Thursday and Friday. The shuttle blasted into space on Nov. 19.

Mission control officials ruled out an alternative landing site, at Edwards Air Force Base in California, because of high winds there Friday.

Columbia, the United States' oldest space shuttle, has experienced a frustrating series of glitches and delays during its 21st mission.

A few days before the scheduled Nov. 8 departure, Columbia's five astronauts learned that liftoff had been delayed for at least a week to allow the NASA to check the shuttle's rockets.

After two more delays caused by bad weather and the scheduled launch of the Atlas-IIA with Eutelsat's Hot Bird-2 satellite aboard, Columbia finally blasted off on Nov. 19.

Two days later, the astronauts had a scare when they launched Wake Shield Facility, one of two satellites scheduled for release during their mission.

After its release, the two-tonne satellite came to within three metres of the shuttle, five metres closer than expected.

Another glitch occurred when astronauts Tammy Jernigan and Tom Jones were unable to open a hatch to begin a six-hour spacewalk. They had been scheduled to work with equipment for use in the construction of the future space station Alpha.

U.S. sees Pakistan government tougher on Taleban

WASHINGTON (R) — Pakistan's new caretaker government is more critical than its predecessor of the Islamic fundamentalist Taleban movement which has seized control of most of Afghanistan, U.S. officials said Friday.

They were speaking after what the State Department described as good conversations between U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Pakistani Foreign Minister Sahibzada Yaqoob Khan on Afghanistan and other issues.

"I think in general the new interim Pakistani government seems to be more critical of some of the Taleban practices, and are open about it," said one State Department official who asked not to be identified.

"Certainly (it) is following a policy which we believe is consistent with our own, which is: don't stoke the fires, don't try to encourage further violence in Afghanistan, try to encourage peaceful discussion of the problem."

The ousted Pakistani government of Benazir Bhutto has been widely reported to have backed Taleban, which captured some two thirds of Afghanistan in September, including the capital Kabul, but has failed to gain control of the whole country.

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Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
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Telephones: 684311, 699634

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

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Effort to reconcile nation

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein's current visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and his talks with UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan break new grounds in Jordan's quest for better relations with the Arab Gulf states in general and the UAE in particular. The visit is the first of its kind by the King since 1990, when Jordanian-Gulf relations were strained over the Kingdom's position on the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis and war that was triggered by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Jordan has since been seeking to rectify the misreading of its posture during the crisis and its effort has been lately bearing fruit.

The King's efforts to present Jordan's case in its truest colours took him to several Arab capitals in the region, including Riyadh, Muscat, Doha and Bahrain. His Majesty's trip to the UAE to attend celebrations marking its silver jubilee and the anniversary of Sheikh Zayed's assumption of his constitutional powers has to be seen as part of the continued efforts to reconstruct bridges between the Kingdom and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in which the UAE is playing a pivotal role. Abu Dhabi has been for months calling for a healing of wounds between Baghdad and the rest of the Arab Gulf capitals as a prelude to the eventual reintegration of Iraq into the Arab fold. Qatar has also been calling for an end to the suffering of the Iraqi people by lifting the crippling and indiscriminate sanctions against Iraq.

The King's talks with the UAE leader follow talks he had with Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Al Sahaf. The Jordanian-Iraqi talks came in the wake of the application of U.N. Security Council Resolution 986 that would allow Baghdad to export some of its oil in order to import critically needed food and medicine. Jordan has always called for measures to alleviate the sufferings of the Iraqi people who were never responsible for the decisions that led to the Gulf crisis in 1990 in the first place.

While it is still premature to talk about a rehabilitation of Iraq, which obviously cannot be done before the U.S. administration makes its position clear on the matter, Jordan and the other Gulf states, mainly Oman, Qatar and the UAE, can certainly influence the course of events in the wider Mideast region by forging common stands aimed at serving the interests of all countries of the area. Iraq, of course, has to do its share in augmenting this effort. Not only does it have to abide by all U.N. Security Council resolutions, it also has to change its posture, and start a new chapter in its relations with its neighbours.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE APPOINTMENT of Madeleine Albright as the first woman American secretary of state is considered a success for women in the United States where they continue to struggle for equality with men, said Munes Razzaz, a writer for Al Ra'i, Samirday. But the problem of the new secretary of state is that she does not differentiate between the oppressor and the oppressed because, in her view, the Jews are persecuted by the Palestinians, the United States is facing oppression from Iraq and the Europeans are subjugated by the African nations, he said. Thus, Ms. Albright's appointment does not give us cause for optimism with regard to the future of the Middle East peace process, he added. Having assumed the post of secretary of state of the largest empire in history, Ms. Albright is not expected to ease the starvation of the Iraqi people by relaxing the sanctions on Iraq and so, although her appointment might be considered as a gain for women around the world, she is a cause of suffering for women and children in Iraq and a peril to humanity, charged the writer. He said Ms. Albright's behaviour as America's U.N. ambassador depicted her as evil and instrumental in causing further sufferings to the oppressed.

A WRITER for Al Ra'i considered a call by Al Mustakbal political party for a general congress of all political parties in the Arab World, to be held in Amman, as a last resort for the drowning Arab Nation. Perhaps this call will find favourable response with various political groups that would meet here and discuss ways of salvaging the Arab Nation from demise, said Sultan Hanab. The Arab countries are at a loss because their regimes lack the political will to take steps towards achieving solidarity and mending fences with each other, he pointed out. Despite their apparent weakness and lack of coordination among themselves, the political groups in the Arab World might be able to do something to unite the masses of the Arab World and bridge the gap that has separated them so far, said the writer. The idea of holding a congress for all Arab parties, he said, should be encouraged and backed by all means, especially as the projected meeting is to take place in Jordan, a country that has started to enjoy pluralism and respect for human rights, thus creating an opportune atmosphere for the meeting's success.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

CBJ encourages dinar utilisation in economy

THE JORDANIAN government did everything it could to enhance the benefit of the Jordanian dinar as a saving instrument not only in Jordan but also in the Palestinian territories.

The most effective and costly measure was the draining of liquidity from the market through the issuance by the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) of certificate of deposits (CDs) denominated in dinars in order to reduce supply of, and increase demand on the dinar.

This measure required raising interest rates on the CDs to 9.25 and 9.5 per cent, even though the exchange rate of the dinar is pegged to the dollar which does not earn more than 5 per cent interest, leaving a net advantage in favour of the dinar of around 4.5 per cent per annum.

In Jordan, only the dollar is competing with the dinar. The dollar deposits have been grown steadily, reaching the level of 40 per cent of all deposits in the Jordanian banking system. The Central Bank was obliged to take action in order to halt the "dollarisation" of the economy. It came up with new measures, especially the imposition of a 14 per cent cash reserve without interest on all dollar deposits, instead of the previous 35 per cent, but with full interest. This step was supposed to further reduce the attraction towards the dollar and enhance favouring the dinar, with a 5 per cent per annum interest, which was meant to convince many to switch back to dinar-denominated assets.

In Palestine, the competition is not only with the American dollar but with the Israeli shekel as well. It was noticed that the dinar has been in retreat lately. The share of dinars in the overall deposits in Jordanian banks operating in the West Bank and Gaza dropped from 77 per cent at the end of 1994 to 55 per cent at the end of 1995, to 40 per cent by the middle of 1996, i.e., around JD 400 million.

It is possible that the reduction of dinar holdings in favour of dollars in the Palestinian territories is not totally caused by shifting dinar deposits to dollars. One other reason may be transfer of dinar deposits from banks in the West Bank to banks in Jordan, especially when it became evident that the peace process on the Palestinian track was not going well, and the uncertainty regarding the future of a Palestinian state.

It is worth mentioning here that the tight monetary measures applied by the CBJ were not meant solely to support the dinar and enhance its appeal; they were also called for because of other objectives, such as curbing aggregate demand, reducing imports and serving as a balance of payments instrument. An increase in dinar supplies would reflect negatively on CBJ foreign exchange reserves.

The central bank's monetary policy is so tight and effective that money supply was down last September by 12.3 per cent in comparison to the same month the previous

year, a first time occurrence in Jordan, more commendable now when inflation is running at around 6 per cent and GDP is growing at 5 per cent, which suggests that the economy is operating at a level of liquidity which is 21.2 per cent below last year.

Another possible explanation for the decline in money supply is the gradual redemption of diars in the West Bank.

CORRECTION

In my article last Sunday, I erroneously stated that the rate of unemployment in Jordan stands at 7.7 per cent only. In fact this represents the unemployed relative to all those between 15 and 75 years of age.

However, the rate of unemployment relative to the labour force is 17.1 per cent. Labour force is the sum of those who are actually employed (36.8 per cent) and those who are looking for jobs (7.7 per cent), i.e., 44.5 per cent of the above-age category.

Using this proper method and based on the survey, I conclude that unemployment in Jordan is actually 15 per cent among males and 27.3 per cent among females, on overall average of 17.1.

Newswoman of courage cuts through the lies

By Robert Fisk

ALGIERS — Salima Ghezali dipped her slice of cake-like bread into the dish of "meshoui", a thick paste of tomato, peppers and onions which the waiter had brought to our table with a flourish when Algeria's only female newspaper editor walked into his restaurant. She spoke quickly and quietly but with immense eloquence and courage. Journalists here are a dying breed — 69 have so far been shot, had their throats cut or been tortured to death — but Ms. Ghezali could not be more alive, her words as sharp as razor blades, her humour as cutting as a knife.

Was she afraid, we ask? She nods at us brightly. "Almost all the time. Some days I forget to be afraid. Today? I was afraid all last night but this morning I woke up and the weather was beautiful and everything was OK. Sometimes I try to convince myself that I'm a good Muslim so that I

somehow get divine protection. It's very irrational, the way we build our psychological hopes. Sometimes there are days I phone my daughters or friends and we decide to say a prayer at the same time in the evening to create a kind of 'wave'. It's a game that's both serious and non-serious. It's completely irrational to create rites of this type — to prevent us saying to ourselves 'it comes when it comes'."

It — sudden and frightful death — gets banished to the edge of our conversation as Ms. Ghezali, editor of the 60,000 circulation weekly La Nation, studies the menu of cheese pastries and traditional Algerian briques à l'oeuf pizzas. "I always have trouble deciding what to eat," she says suddenly. "The problem of making decisions begins when you are raised in a country where you have no choice about anything. My friends have the same problem — they have made political decisions but when faced with choices, they can't do

anything!"

Ms. Ghezali laughs at her own joke, a shake of the head turning the long red hair on her shoulders. A divorced mother of two, she was a schoolteacher in the wild Mitidja hills before turning to journalism. She has been editor in chief of her liberal paper for two years. "Promotion comes earlier in wartime than in peacetime," she observes gently.

"There are a lot of young people who could be good journalists in Algeria but they don't have the right training. They don't lie on purpose. But in a country like this, information is held exclusively by the authorities — and this gives them an extreme margin of manipulation that enables them to control the journalists and makes them lie, sincerely. A lot of journalists here are honest, respectable people but when they are told, for example, that a man has been killed by the Islamic Armed Group — the GIA — the journalists have

no means to check, so they go ahead and say what they are told."

In the afternoon sunlight, Ms. Ghezali's face clouds over. "There are terrible means of placing psychological control on journalists here," she says. "At the beginning of the attacks on journalists and intellectuals, the security services provided them with video-cassettes which showed terrorists torturing and assassinating people, cutting their throats. I know these cassettes exist but I don't know where they are."

"The security authorities claim that the terrorists made these cassettes to show their violence. But you can also see how it's an excellent way for the authorities to impress the people who are the conduit for information — that is, the journalists. I have spoken to some who have seen these cassettes — and after that, when you say the word 'political dialogue,' they think you are a monster."

Talking to Ms. Ghezali is

both inspiring and deeply depressing. Inspiring because of her bravery, depressing because of her pessimism and because there are not many Salima Ghezalis in Algeria.

The winner of three international press awards, including the International Press Club's prize awarded to her in Spain in July this year, her paper was temporarily closed by the government a year ago. "We told our readers that the circumstances for holding the presidential elections (which gave the presidency to General Liamine Zerrouk) were not right. We said nothing would change. So they shut us down for two weeks. Unfortunately, we were right."

Last March, the government closed La Nation again, this time for an article on Algerian human-rights violations. "The whole issue was seized. Two weeks later, we were banned again because of an article about the 'self-defence' militias, even though Amnesty

International had said the same thing. The only news that the regime lets through is news that's in its favour. We can get scoops but we can't print them. That's why we decided to publish analysis instead... but everything that's outside the system has already been swept away, and if a newspaper like La Nation can continue to exist, it's because we are prepared as well to work within the system."

After lunch, we drive La Nation's editor to her office to collect this week's edition, through the crowded downtown streets with their eternal, watching, unsmiling men. "It's a job that's intellectually very frustrating," she says. "On a weekly, you have to explain all the lies that have been told all week so you can explain what you want to say. No one has ever called us in to discuss our line but we know what we can't write. It's complete self-censorship."

The Independent

The golden age of cars

By Gwynne Dyer

TAKE A Honda Civic, shrink it a bit and give it a tougher, simpler suspension. Then take out the airbags, anti-lock brakes, heaters and rear-window defrosters, but add an extra air-conditioning vent in the back seat. And what do you get? You get the Honda City — which is not, Honda's publicity people insist, an "Asia car."

But it is built in Thailand, and it is priced to sell to the emerging middle classes of the booming Asian markets. Do not call it an "Asia car," or they will think they are being short-changed, but that is what it is. And everybody's getting in on the act: Fiat's producing the Palio, Ford is bringing out the KA, and all three South Korean car makers are working on stripped-down but good-looking models to sell all around what used to be the Third World.

First the good news, then the bad. The good news is that the global explosion in the car population has slowed down. From 1896 to 1990, the number of cars in the world grew at an average of 8 per cent a year; between 1950 and the present, it rose from just 50 million to almost half a billion. But now all the old industrial markets are nearing saturation level, and through the '90s, growth is expected to average less than one per cent a year.

The bad news, from the environmental perspective, is that this is just the lull before the real storm. Western Europe, North America and Japan may be sated, but now it is the turn of the billions in the newly industrialising countries. All over Asia and Latin America, huge new production capacity is going in.

The output of cars in

India will more than double by 2000. The four largest car-makers in Brazil, General Motors, Volkswagen and Fiat, are all doubling their investment, and new manufacturers are crowding in. By 2010 China will be the world's third-largest car market, according to the State Information Centre, with annual demand running at between 3.5 million and 6.5 million cars a year.

Unless there is some drastic shift in public taste and values, we are heading for a world of one billion cars — and not too long afterwards, a world of two billion cars or more. Automobiles are still the most desirable single consumer article in the world, even in congested Asian cities like Bangkok where the traffic often moves slower than walking speed. When people get the money, they will buy the cars — even if the heavens fall.

Will the heavens fall? And if they start to fall, what will we do about it?

A couple of years ago, the Environmental and Forecasting Institute in Heidelberg, Germany calculated the lifetime environmental impact of a modern medium-size car — not a 1960s gas-guzzling monster, but a '90s car that uses unleaded fuel, gets 10 km/litre, and has a catalytic converter.

The numbers were impressive. Manufacturing such a car and driving it for 10 years will dump 59.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, leave 26.5 tonnes of waste to be disposed of somewhere, and produce 2.04 million cubic metres of polluted air. Now multiply those figures by one or two billion, and you have some idea of the scale of the problem we will face in coming years.

All this does not even count the direct human cost of driving cars. In Germany, the Heidelberg institute calculated, every 1,000 cars built are responsible for 2.2 deaths, ten handicapped people, and over 125 serious injuries. And that is in Germany, where the fatality rate is only 6 people per billion kilometres driven. In Spain, it is 61 dead per billion km. driven. In Ethiopia, there is one death a year for each 63 cars.

"The newly affluent consumers of Asia and Latin America have every bit as much right to pollute the planet as their cousins in the older industrialised countries. Indeed, no force on earth will dissuade them from doing so — at least, not unless the sacrifices are shared equally by new consumers and old alike"

Yet people will have their cars, and it is the Third World's turn. The newly affluent consumers of Asia and Latin America have every bit as much right to pollute the planet as their

cousins in the older industrialised countries. Indeed, no force on earth will dissuade them from doing so — at least, not unless the sacrifices are shared equally by new consumers and old alike.

Cars can be made less polluting, of course. Areas like the Los Angeles basin would already be death-traps if increased fuel efficiency and catalytic converters had not cancelled out the environmental impact of doubling the local car population since the 1960s. But the global problem is that the carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases produced by industrial societies are creating the conditions for catastrophic changes in the world's climate.

Cars are a big part of the problem, and the fastest growing part, too. As their numbers mount, either they will have to become radically less polluting — or we will have to restrict their numbers of global agreement.

Quantum improvements in car performance are not unimaginable. For example, Amory Lovins of the Rocky Mountain Institute, an energy think-tank near Aspen, Colorado, claims that it is now possible to build a "hyper-car," using ultra-light carbon-fibre construction and the latest in hybrid-electric propulsion, that would improve fuel efficiency between 400 and 1,000 per cent without paying major penalties in power, reliability or affordability.

Maybe so, but all the new production capacity going on now will turn out millions upon millions of quite conventional cars. And at some point in the next ten or fifteen years, when the first major climate-related calamity hits, we will all find ourselves negotiating limits on how

many of those cars the planet can afford.

It will be a very interesting negotiation, with major new economic powers like India, China, Indonesia and Brazil refusing to curb their own consumers' lust for cars so long as per-capita car ownership in the older industrialised countries is still far higher. Rationing of car-ownership permits will

be a distinct possibility, with the permits allocated either by competitive bidding (as is already the case in Singapore) or by pure lottery.

Our love affair with the car is nowhere near its end, but in times to come we will look back on this era as the golden age of the automobile.

LETTERS

Courtesy reply

To the Editor:

JORDAN IS advancing rapidly in the field of communications, but the majority of citizens still have to resort to regular mail correspondence for their daily affairs.

For instance, when faced with a problem or having an idea, an Amman resident would first approach the local authority only to be told that because of centralisation he/she would need to contact a ministry in Amman. The time and the expense might just make it impossible to travel, so the only alternative is a letter.

Now, it does not seem to be in the nature of modern Jordanian way of conducting business to acknowledge receipt of correspondence or respond on a first instance, and, as time drags by, it seems any further action is left to the correspondent, whilst the original letter gathers dust.

Continued courtesy demands that at least some very junior clerk put an acknowledgement card of receipt in the mail lest the keen correspondent is completely at a loss as to what, or when, to do next.

It is just not fair that this has become the expected norm and spells the breakdown of communication, regardless of fax, telephone and the Internet, for the majority of the population does not have these services.

Communication has to be a two-way system to achieve action and where letters are the only way to cross the big divide, they must be answered by the recipient.

Paul Saint, Aqaba.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Iraq to resume oil sales amid seasonal peak in demand

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Iraq is to resume oil exports for the first time since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait at a time when seasonal demand is climbing to its highest level and prices are on the verge of hitting a 12-year high.

The official Iraqi News Agency INA said Friday that Baghdad would start pumping oil at 0500 GMT on Tuesday under an oil-for-food deal with the United Nations allowing Iraq to sell \$2 worth of oil every six months to buy food and medicines.

The deal was first agreed in May, and had Iraq started exports in the summer when consumption is at its lowest level prices could well have fallen in response to the extra supplies.

However, differences with the U.N. and the United States delayed the implementation of the deal and kept prices firm.

"The resumption of Iraqi crude supplies at this time of the year will not have a strong impact on oil

prices," an Abu Dhabi-based oil analyst said.

"Demand is very high now and is set to peak in the first quarter (of 1997). It is projected to exceed 26 million barrels per day (bpd)."

Oil prices on Friday held steady on the London market at more than \$24 a barrel after the Iraqi announcement.

At their meeting in Vienna last month, the oil ministers of the 11-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) re-admitted Iraq into the quota system by allocating it 1.3 million bpd, including its local consumption.

But experts said the cartel, which produces around 40 per cent of the world's total crude supplies, needed to cut excess output to keep prices strong. They noted OPEC was producing nearly one million bpd above its ceiling and that most of the surplus came from Venezuela and Nigeria.

"There is a need to remove that surplus or part

of it from the market if OPEC wants to safeguard prices. Demand will be high in the first quarter (of 1997) but Iraqi crude means OPEC's supplies will surpass demand," an expert said.

The quantities of Iraqi crude to reach the market depends on the oil price as they could increase if the price declines. But experts expect Baghdad to export between 600,000 and 800,000 bpd in the first half of 1997.

Iraq is the second biggest oil power in the world after Saudi Arabia, controlling more than 10 per cent of the global recoverable crude reserves.

Its production exceeded three million bpd under OPEC's quota agreements before the U.N. Security Council imposed crippling economic sanctions on Baghdad to punish it for its 1990 invasion of neighbouring Kuwait.

The absence of Iraq from the market combined with a sharp drop in the Western

crude inventories this year to push up prices to their highest level since the oil boom of early 1980s.

They have remained above OPEC's \$21 target over the past few months and are set to average \$20 per barrel this year.

While the boycott has meant a loss of more than \$100 billion for Iraq in six years, it has benefitted Saudi Arabia and other Gulf oil heavyweights.

The oil earnings of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — grouping Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — are projected to soar by nearly \$12 billion to \$90 billion in 1996, their highest level in nearly 13 years, according to a UAE bank study.

"This year is one of the best years for the Gulf oil producers. But with the resumption of Iraqi oil sales, the situation appears uncertain next year," an oil expert said.

Gulf states urged to open bourses to foreigners

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Gulf Arab states should open up their stock markets to foreign investors to attract capital needed for their privatisation programmes, a prominent Gulf economist said on Saturday.

Henry Assam, chief economist at the Saudi National Commercial Bank, said around \$20 billion were being siphoned out every year by expatriate workers in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

"In order to accelerate the privatisation process and encourage capital inflow, Gulf states should consider opening up their stock markets to foreign-

ers residing in the region as a first step then to foreigners outside the region," he wrote in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) daily Al Khaleej.

"If Gulf states are able to provide investment channels to those foreigners, then this will help keep at least part of those remittances."

Oman and Bahrain are the only GCC countries that allow foreigners to own shares in their markets but such ownership has remained restricted.

Foreign investors are not permitted to trade in stocks in the other GCC members — Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE.

Most GCC states have embarked on reforms to revive their economies which have been hurt by lower oil export earnings. The reforms include privatisations and improvement of investment laws.

Mr. Azzam said direct foreign investment in the 15-year-old Gulf economies, political and defence alliance had remained relatively low. It stood at around \$1.2 billion in 1995 compared with \$1.6 billion in 1994.

Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil supplier, emerged as the biggest beneficiary, attracting nearly \$890 million in 1995.

Greenspan wants to deflate, not burst stock bubble

WASHINGTON (R) — Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan could hardly have had more of an immediate impact on the world's skittish financial markets than if he had raised interest rates.

By hinting that buoyant U.S. stock prices may be overheated, Mr. Greenspan triggered a worldwide rush to sell stocks, bonds and the dollar on fears that the high-flying markets were headed for a crash.

But analysts said the central bank chief — arguably the most powerful financial official in the world — was not out to burst the stock-price bubble, just deflate it a bit. Mr. Greenspan was unlikely to raise interest rates soon, they said.

"Greenspan wanted to take some of the air out of the stock market balloon," said David Jones, vice chairman of brokerage Aubrey G. Lanson and Co. "In no way did I sense that he was threatening to tighten, though he clearly was jawboning."

His timing, in some sense, could not have been better. Blue-chip stocks, which have jumped about 25 per cent this year, had shown signs of running out of steam this week as investors cashed in some profits.

The Dow Jones industrial average tumbled more than 140 points after Mr. Greenspan's comments, but then the market stabilised. It ended down 55 points at 6,381.95, for a 0.85 per cent decline.

The early drop on Wall Street followed steep sell-offs overnight in major markets from Tokyo to London.

"I don't think the Fed raising rates would have triggered as much a reaction in Asia as this did," said Cynthia Latta, of Massachusetts-based Consultants Dri/McGraw Hill.

In his speech on Thursday, Mr. Greenspan said the Fed must be wary when "irrational exuberance" infects stock and other asset markets because that could end up hurting the economy.

While he stopped short of commenting directly on recent stock market action, his remarks suggested that he was concerned — and were taken that way by Wall Street.

But it was not clear what the Fed chief could do, other than talking, if he indeed felt stock prices were too high and headed for a crash that could hurt the economy.

If the central bank raised interest rates to try to cool off speculative fervour, it would risk triggering the very stock market meltdown it was seeking to avoid, analysts said.

The Fed holds its next policy-making meeting on Dec. 17 and was widely expected to hold interest rates steady amid signs of moderate economic growth with steady inflation.

That feeling was reinforced by news Friday that the unemployment rate rose to 5.4 per cent last month, from 5.2 per cent in October, as the number of new jobs created fell to 118,000 from 224,000.

Analysts said the jobs report helped quiet fears that a tight labour market would push up wages, forcing the central bank to raise short-term rates in a bid to ward off inflation.

Mr. Greenspan himself said on Thursday that inflation has been low, but added that its "future course remains uncertain."

Some Fed officials privately admitted they would feel more comfortable if stock prices were somewhat lower. But they showed no signs of wanting to do anything about it.

In fact, Fed officials' public comments about the generally rosy outlook for the economy have if anything contributed to the euphoria on Wall Street.

"There is every reason why the market should be exuberant," said James Glassman, senior economist at Chase Securities, noting the Fed has signalled it felt that inflation was under control and the economy was sound.

In trying to come to terms with the stock market, the Fed faces something of a dilemma. Higher stock prices are good for the economy because investors feel — and at least on paper are — richer and spend more.

The danger is that if prices run up too high too fast, that could lead to a collapse that would ripple through the economy. A sudden sell-off could push brokers into bankruptcy, sap consumer confidence and possibly even drive the economy into recession.

Ministers arrive in Singapore for landmark world trade talks

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Ministers began arriving here Saturday for a landmark meeting expected to lay the groundwork for a new round of global trade liberalisation in the 21st century, but contentious issues loom over the talks.

The week-long inaugural ministerial meeting of the 125-member World Trade Organisation (WTO), which starts Monday, is aimed at reviewing the progress of the two-year-old, Geneva-based global trade watchdog.

Among the high-powered trade delegations scheduled to arrive Saturday were the French, British, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korean teams. Thirty observer delegations, including WTO applicants China and Russia, were also coming to the ministerial talks, to be held every two years.

Singapore's Trade and Industry Minister Yeo Cheow Tong said in a statement ahead of the talks that the

main task was to "critically review" the implementation of the Uruguay Round (UR) of trade liberalisation talks which ended in 1994 and gave birth to the WTO.

Mr. Yeo, who will chair the meeting, said "solid implementation" of the UR commitments and timely execution of a "built-in agenda" for negotiations on agriculture, services and other areas — due before the end of the decade — would lay the groundwork for a new global round of trade talks around 2000.

He said the Singapore conference "would have achieved its purpose if it contributed significantly to laying this groundwork."

But Mr. Yeo indicated that contentious issues could occupy much of the ministers' time, and appealed for compromise and understanding.

Negotiators for WTO member countries in Geneva failed

last week to agree on the text of a policy declaration to be adopted in Singapore, leaving their ministers to work out their differences.

WTO sources said the most difficult passages involved textiles, agriculture, social norms and new areas such as investment and competition.

Western demands to enforce labour standards under a "social clause" as part of trade rules are expected to generate vigorous debate in Singapore.

Developing countries, led by Asian nations, view this as an attempt to strip them of the advantages they enjoy from lower wages, while Western governments are under pressure to protect domestic jobs from cheaper competitors overseas.

On Friday, international trade union leaders meeting in Singapore ahead of the WTO talks stepped up pressure for universal labour rights to be written into trade rules.

Algeria privatises stores for \$7.1 m

PARIS (R) — Algeria's state-run Enterprise Des Galeries d'Oran (EDGO) has sold four "supermarket-type shops" to Algerians for a total of 390 million dinars (\$7.1 million), the official Algerian news agency APS said on Saturday.

The agency said the four in the western city of Oran had been closed for more than a year because of financial problems.

Bids for the shops were between 10 and 30 per cent higher than the offer price.

They were among seven offered for sale by EDGO.

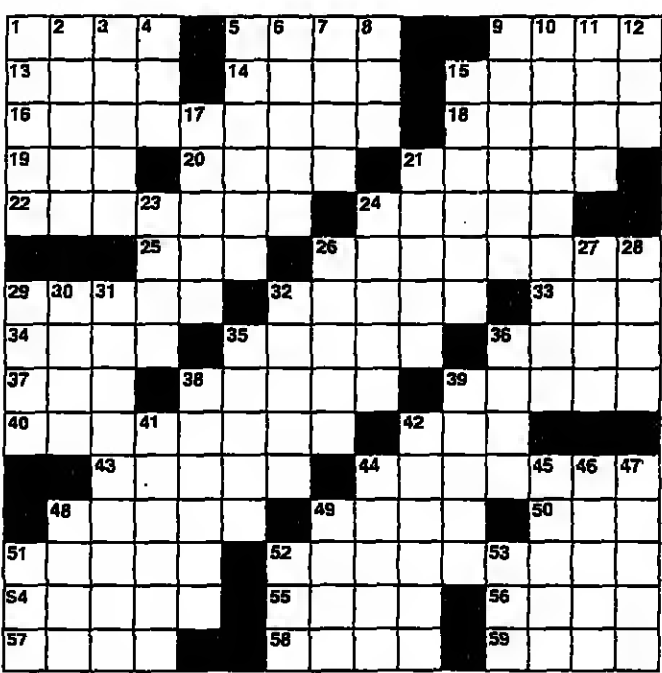
Similar state-run enterprises in eight other cities have offered a total of 37 supermarkets for sale, APS said. "With this operation, Oran appears to have become the pioneer in privatisation," the agency said.

"From 12 tourist hotels in different parts of the country offered for sale in 1994 and 1996 only the Chateaufort Hotel in Oran has found a buyer."

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Conclude one's case
- 5 Middle East person
- 9 Nick and Nora's pet
- 13 Nobelist Wiesel
- 14 Sulk
- 15 Quoted as authority
- 16 Stubborn
- 18 Missed the mark
- 19 Corroded
- 20 Dull
- 21 Saint — fire
- 22 Groom's sidekick
- 24 Revolutionary hero, Eihan
- 25 Kinsman: abbr.
- 26 Twain's "The Mysterious —"
- 29 Did carpentry work
- 32 Drive
- 33 — mode
- 34 Busy as —
- 35 "— Jose!"
- 36 Stiffly formal
- 37 Hyson
- 38 More tender
- 39 Fernando
- 40 Dog from Norway
- 42 Part of R.S.V.P.
- 43 Projecting type parts
- 44 Onion
- 48 Annoying bugs
- 49 Arch
- 50 A Gabor
- 51 Strainer
- 52 Second lieutenant
- 54 Look in disdain
- 55 Step
- 56 Anglo-Saxon laborer
- 57 "Sweeney —" (Sondheim play)
- 58 Ripening factor
- 59 Oregs



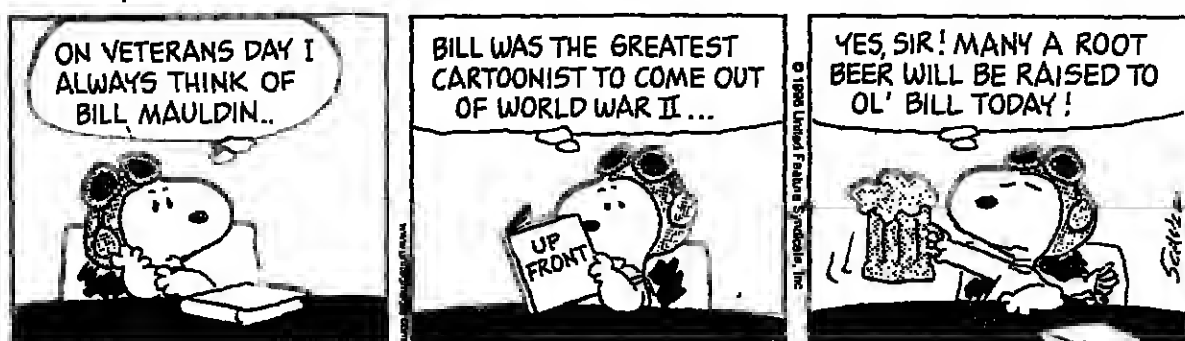
by CF Murray



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- 2 Fill with joy
- 3 Fathers
- 4 Actor Danson
- 5 Ethically neutral
- 6 Violinist's purchase
- 7 Copied
- 8 Garden plot
- 9 USAF
- 10 Use force against
- 11 Football props
- 12 Do sums
- 15 Last place
- 17 Appointed
- 21 "Crazy Legs" Hirsch
- 23 Shoe insert
- 24 Fragrance
- 26 Planted
- 27 Charles Lamb
- 28 Bangs into
- 29 Overfill
- 30 Fourth person
- 31 Timid
- 32 Daybreak times
- 35 Parts of speech
- 36 Become boring
- 37 Postal machine
- 38 Rain forest vine
- 41 Chucked
- 42 Small boy
- 44 Room
- 45 Contract
- 46 Sheeplike
- 47 Yarns
- 48 Football Hall-of-Famer, Marchetti
- 49 Dance of old
- 51 Dulles arrival
- 52 Hot tub
- 53 — Aviv

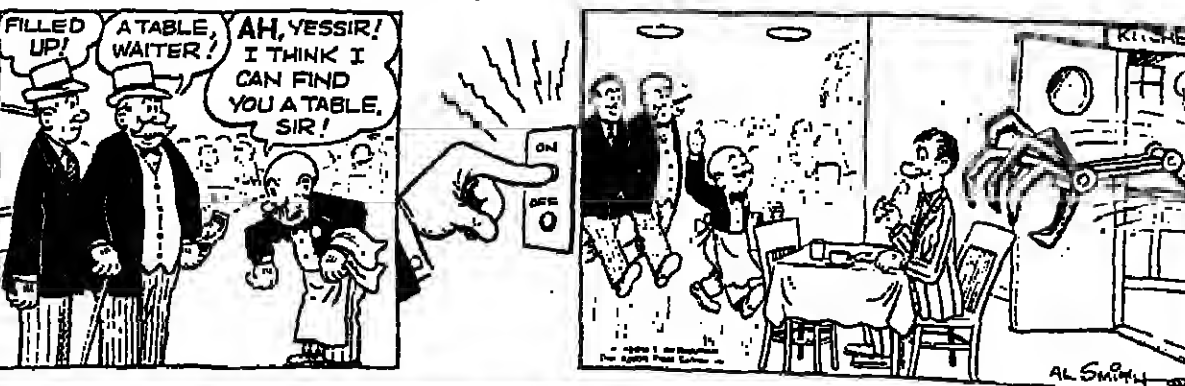
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) See bigwigs socially today who can appreciate your fine talents and will show you how best to make them work to your advantage. Later this evening you can get together with fellow associates and plan new ways for success.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Invite guests in today who are most desirable and interesting to you. Make the days ahead much brighter, by consulting with knowledgeable people and make your career activities more successful for your loved ones.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Take time today to ease the situation with outside allies and then you can make real progress towards becoming prosperous. Later this evening, will be good for going to a romantic spot with your mate.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Study into today whatever can bring you greater abundance in the days ahead and make your efforts in business activities more prosperous. Later this evening can be good if you will relax with your loved ones at home.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This is a good day today to get in touch with persons you admire and gain their advice and support for the days ahead. Later tonight you can seek out knowledgeable people and make the best use of suggestions which are given.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Although you are very particular today about neatness and detail, this is a day to concentrate on big issues. Later this evening make the best of any advice of information which is provided to make your career activities prosperous.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Get out socially as much as you can today and be with charming persons who can give you good advice. Deepen relations later this evening which are important to you and the success which you are seeking.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Try to understand the suggestions today of influential people and then follow them for excellent results in the days ahead. Later this evening can be made successful if you are willing to act upon information for career activities.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You can go after your wishes today with a good chance of gaining them. Avoid one who tells too many lies or you could get the wrong information which could put you in hot water with those in authority.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) This is a good day today when your hunches can be most accurate, so be sure to rely on them as well as good judgment and you can realize your longterm goals. Later tonight make every effort to complete a new assignment.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Situations arise which will help you to use outside events very much to your advantage at this time, so make the best of any benefits. Later tonight you can get together with close friends and have a wonderful time with them.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You are able today to add to present activities and you can gain more success with ease. Talk the days ahead over with allies and make the most of any suggestions which are made to you by them and thereby increase your income.

Birthstone of December: Turquoise — Zircon.

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Havelange to retire as FIFA president

BARCELONA (R) — Joao Havelange, president of FIFA since 1974, announced Saturday he would retire from the post at the end of the 1998 World Cup finals in France.

Havelange, 80, said: "I told the executive committee of my decision this morning. It is my own decision and it is final. The most important thing is not to know when to arrive but when to leave."

There has been speculation for some time about when the octogenarian Brazilian, who succeeded Britain's Sir Stanley Rous 22 years ago, would stand down. But his timing was still a surprise.

"I will have a clear conscience when I leave after 24 years that I have served FIFA and world soccer well with those

who have supported me," Havelange said.

"We have changed football throughout the world. Football is the most important sport in the world in terms of employment, advertising and for bringing joy to young people. We have all worked for this, which is why we are where we are today."

Among those being tipped as a possible successor is Franz Beckenbauer of Germany, who said last month he was planning to step down as the president of Bayern Munich in the summer of 1998.

Beckenbauer captained West Germany to World Cup victory in 1974 and led them to another triumph in the tournament as team chief in 1990.

Mandela urges IOC to give 2004 Games to Cape Town

CAPE TOWN (R) — President Nelson Mandela on Saturday urged the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to validate the five ring Olympic symbol by awarding the Games to Africa and specifically to Cape Town in 2004.

"We have the capacity to organise an event of this nature," Mandela told reporters after talks with the IOC evaluation commission which is on a four-day visit to Cape Town.

He said that while the commission was in Cape Town to make a technical assessment of the city's formal bid to host the games, it was important for them to note that the south African bid had the support of the entire continent.

"We as South Africans are confident that we have done everything in our power to put us in a good position to win the bid," he said.

Holding up a set of Olympic rings symbolising the five continents given to him by commission chairman Thomas Bach, Mandela said:

"We also made the point that it would be the first time that the Olympic Games take place on the continent of Africa and therefore these five rings, which until today have remained largely academic because there has never been an Olympic games in Africa, would then be fulfilled."

Bach told a news conference that the symbolism of an African venue would not influence the report of his commission which will prepare for a decision in March to shortlist four or five cities.

"Our task is not to deal with that. That's a political question," he said, adding that this consideration could influence the IOC's 106-member selection college when it makes the final decision on September 5 next year.

Bach said the commission had to compare vastly different bids and had to look eight years into the future basing its analysis on facts, not speculation.

He said the commission would not be influenced by the lack of facilities at present, adding: "the best athletes deserve the best facilities. We are looking for state of the art in 2004, not state of the art today."

He said the assessors would meet local opponents of the bid before they leave on Tuesday.

About 20 opponents protested outside Cape Town airport when the IOC team arrived on Friday and Saturday placed an advertisement in a city newspaper.

"Cape Town, wake up to the Olympics risks," the group said, listing high crime, poor transport, rocketing unemployment and collapsing health services as priorities to be addressed.

Middlesbrough can damage your career, Branco says

LONDON (R) — Playing for Middlesbrough can damage an international footballer's career, Brazilian Branco warned his compatriots Emerson and Juninho on Saturday.

Branco, who left the unfashionable English club in October with eight months of his contract still to run, said: "It is a mistake to sign for a small club in English football."

"All the big stars at Middlesbrough came from big and successful clubs but they have joined a team that simply is not good enough. That can damage their careers."

Branco's comments, published in the express newspaper, were sure to inflame a controversy already raging at the struggling Premier League club over Emerson, who has returned to Brazil with his homesick wife.

Branco, a member of Brazil's 1994 World Cup winning side, said of Middlesbrough, who also have Italian Fabrizio Ravanelli: "Spending lots of money, cannot always buy you a good team. The club has invested in some top-quality players, they have a good chairman with lots of money and a wonderful manager in Bryan Robson...but the players around them struggle too much and they used to panic against good teams."

Midfielder Emerson, who signed at the start of the season from Portugal's Porto in a four million pound (\$6.7 million) deal, has gone absent without leave three times this season and has already been fined six weeks' salary.

Middlesbrough have told him they will not allow him to break his contract, which runs until 2000.



Miami Heat guard Sasha Danilovic (5) and New York Knicks forward Charles Oakley (34) go up for a rebound during the first quarter of NBA action at Miami Arena. New York defeated Miami 103-85 (Reuters photo)

Knicks exact revenge for embarrassing loss to Heat; Jazz continue winning streak

MIAMI (R) — The New York Knicks exacted sweet revenge for a humiliating home loss to their former coach Pat Riley earlier this week by heating the heat in Miami Friday.

Patrick Ewing scored seven of his 26 points in a late fourth-quarter run and John Starks added 21 as New York ended Miami's nine-game winning streak with a 103-85 victory.

"Patrick's a true warrior," said Riley, who coached Ewing for four years in New York. "He showed his mettle tonight."

Allan Houston had 19 points and Chris Childs and Larry Johnson added 13 apiece as the trio of off-season acquisitions helped the Knicks atone for Tuesday's 99-75 embarrassment.

Tim Hardaway had 28 points and nine assists and Dan Majerle added 15 for Miami. Alonzo Mourning was held to 10 points, but grabbed 16 rebounds for the first-place heat, who lead New York by two games in the Atlantic Division.

In Los Angeles, Shaquille O'Neal had 25 points, 18 rebounds, six blocks and five steals in his first game against his former team as the Lakers beat the injury-plagued Orlando Magic 92-81.

O'Neal, who signed as a free agent with the Lakers after spending his first four seasons in Orlando, scored

eight of his points during a 17-2 run that closed the third quarter.

Nick Van Exel added 20 points and 11 assists for the Lakers, who have won four of their last five games.

Gerald Wilkins scored 21 points to lead Orlando, which played without injured starters Nick Anderson, Dennis Scott and Penny Hardaway.

At Utah, the red-hot Jazz made it 13 wins in a row with a 106-95 triumph over the Minnesota Timberwolves.

Jeff Hornacek scored 11 of his 23 points in the decisive third quarter as the Jazz used a 22-8 run to pull away from the T-Wolves.

Karl Malone had 34 points for Utah, which is one win shy of tying the club record for consecutive victories.

Minnesota led 62-50 with 7:45 left in the third when Utah took off, scoring the next 11 points to start the 22-8 run.

In Boston, rookie Kerry Kittles scored 30 points and Jayson Williams added 23 points and 19 rebounds to lead the New Jersey Nets to a 110-108 overtime victory over the Celtics.

Kittles also had seven rebounds, five assists, five steals and did not have a turnover. Robert Pack added 18 points and 12 assists for New Jersey.

Dino Radja had 22 points and 15 rebounds and Antoine Walker added 18 points for the Celtics, who suffered their fifth straight loss.

At Detroit, Terry Mills sank all six of his three-point attempts and finished with 23 points and Otis Thorpe added 19 as the Pistons beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 93-81.

Mills, who also dished out a nine assists, has connected on his last 12 three-pointers, one short of the NBA record set last January by Washington's Brent Price.

Terrell Brandon had 17 points, eight assists and seven boards, while Tyrone Hill contributed 14 points and 13 rebounds for Cleveland.

In Sacramento, Danny Manning scored 19 points and Wesley Person and Michael Finley added 13 apiece as the Phoenix Suns won consecutive games for the first time this season, defeating the reeling Kings 101-95.

Manning made 9-of-14 shots and keyed a 9-2 run that ended the third quarter as Phoenix opened a 71-68 lead. The Suns have won three of four after dropping the first 13 games of the season.

Mitch Richmond had 22 points and seven assists to lead the Kings, losers of seven of their last nine games.

In San Antonio, Bryant Reeves scored 29 points, including a jumper in the second quarter that ignited a 14-1 run, to lead the Vancouver Grizzlies to a 105-89 win over the Spurs.

The Grizzlies broke a five-game losing streak with their first road win of the season. Two of Vancouver's three wins have come against San Antonio.

Dominique Wilkins scored 24 points and Sean Elliott added 22 for San Antonio, which has been without injured star centre David Robinson all season and fell to 3-14.

In Portland, Arvydas Sabonis had 22 points and 10 rebounds and Isaiah Rider added 18 points as the Trail Blazers posted a 97-93 victory over the Charlotte Hornets.

Kenny Anderson added 16 points and nine assists for Portland, which has won four of its last six games. Vlade Divac scored 29 points, while Anthony Mason had 23 points and 17 rebounds for Charlotte, which fell to 1-4 on its seven-game road trip.

At Golden State, Reggie Miller scored 16 points and the Pacers held the Warriors to 30 second-half points in an 86-71 victory for Indiana.

Joe Smith scored 15 points and Latrell Sprewell was held to 12 for Golden State, which fell to 4-7 at home.

Michael Johnson, Gail Devers win Jesse Owens awards

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — Michael Johnson and Gail Devers crowned gold medal seasons Friday by winning the Jesse Owens awards at USA track field's annual meeting.

It was an unprecedented third successive Owens award for Johnson, who became the first athlete in the 15-year history of the award to turn a hat-trick.

Johnson had a dream season, winning an historic Olympic double in the 200 and 400 metres. The Texan shattered his own world record in the 200 at the Games, clocking a spectacular 19.32 seconds. He also extended his 400 metre-finals winning streak to 57 straight.

Devers, who also won the award in 1993, tied Jackie Joyner-Kersey for most Owens honours by a woman.

Devers claimed the sole American women's individual gold in Atlanta, dashing to the 100 metres title. She also won gold on the 4x100 metre relay team and placed fourth in the 100 metre hurdles.

Olympic decathlon champion Dan O'Brien finished a distant second behind Johnson in the men's voting, 2,084 votes to 1,450.

Devers won the women's award by 1,994 to 1,293 over Olympic 4x100 relay teammate and 200 metre bronze medalist Gwen Torrence.

Nancy upset leaders PSG 2-1

PARIS (R) — Northern Ireland forward Phil Gray struck a last-minute winner as relegation candidates Nancy came from behind to inflict a shock 2-1 home defeat on leaders Paris St. Germain in the French First Division on Friday.

The Parisian team's players were jeered off the pitch by their own fans in a 30,000 crowd at the Parc des Princes for failing to breach the visiting defence again after taking a second-minute lead and succumbing to two killer counter-punches.

PSG, beaten at home for the first time since April, remain only one point ahead of Monaco, who are at home to Guingamp on Saturday. Even a draw would put Monaco on top on goal difference.

It was only Nancy's third win in 21 matches though not quite enough to lift them from penultimate place.

Defender and captain Paul Fischer headed Nancy's equaliser 20 minutes from time after France midfielder Bruno N'Gotty had put PSG ahead in the second minute.

Nantes went a record 14 matches unbeaten with a 4-0 away win over Lens which also increased to 41 goals in 21 games the total scored by the best attack in the division.

The win also lifted Nantes to eighth, continuing their steady climb after a disastrous start to the season in which they did not win in their first 10 matches.

N'Doram is joint top scorer in the division with 14 goals after opening the score in the seventh minute.

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♠ K J 9 6 5
♥ 7 5 8
♦ 10 5
♣ K Q J 2

EAST
♠ 10 2
♥ Q J 7 6 5 4
♦ 8 4 2
♣ 6

SOUTH
♠ A Q 3
♥ K 2
♦ A 7 6
♣ 8 6 6 4

The bidding:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1♠ Pass 1NT Pass
2NT Pass 3NT Pass

Opening lead: Six of ♠
Cover up the East and West hands and follow the play at South. Do you play for a 3-3 break or finesse the ace?

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You can no longer establish a club as the fulfilling trick because, when West gains the lead, two more spade tricks will defeat you. Now you have to fall back on diamonds. You cash the king and queen, West dropping the ten on the second round. Do you play for a 3-3 break or finesse the ace?

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South Korea and UAE set for quarter-final berths

ABU DHABI (R) — South Korea and hosts the United Arab Emirates moved with in sight of Asian Cup quarter-final berths after contrasting victories in Group A matches Saturday.

South Korea beat Indonesia 4-2 while the UAE staged a remarkable second half comeback to beat Kuwait 3-2 after trailing 2-0 at halftime.

With one game each to play, South Korea lead the group on goal difference from the UAE with four points. Kuwait and Indonesia have a point apiece.

The winners and runners-up of the three groups plus the two best third-placed teams qualify for the knockout stage.

South Korea looked worthy of the tag of one of Asia's top sides for the first 55 minutes against Indonesia. They scored three times in the opening quarter of an hour and added a fourth after the break to lead 4-0.

But they then relaxed, conceding two goals from



Esam Sakeen (L) of Kuwait and Adel Ahmed of the United Arab Emirates fight for the ball in the Asia Cup group match in Abu Dhabi (Reuters photo)

rare counter-attacks. Kim Do Hoon and Hwang Sun Hong gave the

Koreans a flying start with goals in the fifth and seventh minutes. Hwang

scored his second eight minutes later.

The Koreans dominated for the rest of the half but scored five clear-cut chances.

A fourth goal, scored by Kim Jeong Woon 10 minutes into the second half, hinted at a rout but the Indonesians refused to let their heads drop.

Ronny Wabia scored direct from a corner kick in the 58th minute and then seven minutes later Widodo Putra, who scored a spectacular goal against Kuwait on Wednesday, was again on target with a low shot.

The UAE, boosted off at halftime after conceding goals to Jassem Al Huwaidi in the ninth and 44th minutes, were a different side in the second half.

They were level within 10 minutes of the restart thanks to headed goals by Hassan Ahmed and Adnan Al Talyani.

Kuwait's misery was complete 10 minutes from time when midfielder Bakht Saad ran on to a pass from substitute Zuhair Bakhat to score the winner.



South Korea's Kim Do Hoon (R) who scored the first goal shoots the ball past Indonesian defender Aples Tecuari (L) in the Asia Cup group match in Abu Dhabi. South Korea led the first half 3-0 (Reuters photo)

Jazireh meet Orthodox as Jalil host Ahli tonight

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The first division basketball championship playoffs continue Sunday with the country's top four teams vying for wins that will determine their standings in the Kingdom's elite competition.

Al Jazireh, who scored a momentous 68-55 upset over former champions Al Ahli in the opening playoff game Thursday meet titleholders Al Orthodox hoping to score another win to ensure runner-up or have a chance at the title for the first time in their history.

Al Jazireh lost to Al Orthodox 95-83 in the first round and had a hard

time against Al Jalil before defeating them 66-61.

In Sunday's second match, Al Jalil will try to add to Al Ahli's slumping form when they host them in Irbid.

Al Ahli's coach, Ghait Najar, will have to find the right combination of players to avoid a possible defeat that might make them end up in fourth place for the first time. Al Ahli could only manage a 78-70 win over Al Jalil in the first round.

However, Al Ahli's demoralising defeat to Al Jazireh might have a two-pronged affect in their upcoming game as their defeat to a team other than all-time rivals Al Orthodox was only the second in the past four decades.

Al Ahli had come back from an 11-point deficit to win their first round encounter against Al Jazireh 63-60. They then lost 83-63 to Al Orthodox in the first round clearly demonstrating that they are in no position to capture the title they won in 1990, 1992, 1993, and 1994 as their younger lineup clearly miss the efforts of three of the Kingdom's top stars — Marwan Ma'nuq, Yousef Zaghloul and Naser Bushnaq.

Titleholders Al Orthodox, who had an undisputed reign over the country's basketball scene from 1976-1989, seem the favourites to retain their title led by veteran Hilal Barakat and teammates Fadi Saqqa, Ihab Mslh and Naser Bassam.

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FIFA confirm 2002 World Cup final for Tokyo

BARCELONA (AFP) — FIFA, world football's governing body, confirmed here Saturday that South Korea would host the opening match of the 2002 World Cup finals while co-hosts Japan would hold the final.

The showpiece final will be held in Tokyo with the opening ceremony and opening match in Seoul.

Details leaked out from the earlier meeting in November that Seoul would host the opener while Japan would get the final despite FIFA putting a strict gag order on the two sides.

But within hours details were leaked.

The tournament will be known as 2002 World Cup Korea-Japan.

It was originally proposed to put Japan ahead of Korea in the title but the Koreans dug their heels in and refused to budge.

Japanese hopes of having the number of teams in the final increased to 40 from the 32 that will take part in the 1998 World Cup in France was also firmly rejected at November's meeting.

Japan also pleaded for the majority of matches but it was finally agreed that both nations would have 16 games apiece.

Ken Naguma, president of the Japanese Football Federation, gave his stamp of approval to the division of games for the 2002 World Cup.

"I am happy with the decisions," said Naguma.

"The division of the games between the countries is both reasonable and fair. We will decide the 10 cities — not 15 as initially intended — that will host the matches before the end of the year. It is bound to be difficult and hotly argued.

"On the other hand, I don't know if we will go ahead with plans to project all the games in 3-D in the other stadiums because that idea would have only worked if the cup was held uniquely in Japan.

"We are going to do everything to make this World Cup a success," he added.

For his part, Oh Wan-Kon, the vice-president of the South Korean Football Federation, was more reserved.

"It is very difficult to say if we are happy or unhappy," he said.

"We have to follow FIFA's directives. Since Japan has decided to organise games in 10 cities, we are going to do the same thing.

"Our hope is still to include North Korea in the organisation of the competition, but given the current situation that will be difficult," he added.

Jordan Olympic Committee gets bus from Daimler-Benz

By Christina Schlegel
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — On the occasion of a three-day visit to Jordan, a Daimler-Benz delegation Saturday presented a minibus to the Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC).

In his speech, Daimler-Benz vice-president and head of the consortium, Matthias Kleinert stressed that "sports means youth, and youth is the future of all peoples."

He added that it is "the group's philosophy to consider relations as a balanced combination of business, politics, culture and sport."

Moreover, it is the company's commitment to support all efforts being taken to ensure peace in the Middle East region (see separate story on page 8).

Daimler-Benz, which has been an ally of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) since 1964, pledged to intensify its social and environmental activities in cooperation with the IOC, especially in developing countries and new markets, according to Mr. Kleinert.

He stated that in correspondence with the IOC's Olympic Solidarity Project, National



Daimler-Benz Vice-President Matthias Kleinert hands over the symbolic key for the minibus to Tony Khouri, the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) representative. From left to right: Waqqas Al-Tal, public relations director of the Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC), Tony Khouri, JOC Secretary General Dhouqan Obeidat, and Matthias Kleinert (Photo by Christof Sage)

Olympic Committees of developing countries will have priority in receiving Mercedes-Benz vehicles and transportation services.

Mr. Kleinert concluded that during his last visit to the country, common ground was broken in talks held with members from the Royal Family and representatives of the government on agreeing

to a closer approach of the people in the Middle East and in the European countries.

Speeches were also delivered by Mr. Toni Khouri, the IOC representative, speaking on behalf of its president Juan Antonio Samaranch and Secretary General of the JOC Dhouqan Obeidat.

The presentation was

attended by the President of the Jordanian Sport Federation, representatives of both the Ministry of Youth and the JOC.

At a reception Saturday evening, the delegation was also scheduled to hand over a cheque worth \$10,000 to the Noor Al-Hussein Foundation for the purchase of two buses.

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Ivanisevic pushes grand slam earn

MUNICH (R) — Defending champion Goran Ivanisevic used his record-breaking serve to boost his earnings at the Grand Slam Cup to more than \$3.2 million with a 6-4 6-4 quarter-final victory over Australian Mark Woodforde on Friday.

The big-serving Croat, who before this year had earned \$2.8 million in four appearances at the most lucrative event in the game, made sure of adding another \$431,250 to his bank balance with a straightforward win in just 66 minutes.

Ivanisevic became the third player to reach the last four after three-times Wimbledon champion Boris Becker and Britain's Tim Henman booked their places in the semifinals on Thursday.

The fourth will be decided in a match between French Open champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov and American Jim Courier.

On the way to his victory, Ivanisevic took his total of aces for the year to a record of more than 1,500.

"Now I can say that I am the best server in the game," Ivanisevic said.

The best performers from the four grand slams — Wimbledon and the U.S., French and Australian Opens — qualify for a shot at the jackpot of \$1.625 million paid out to the Munich winner.

Although he has twice been a runner-up at Wimbledon, Ivanisevic has never won a Grand Slam.



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Regional Office in Amman

Purpose of the Post:

Under the general supervision of the Regional Programme Officer, contributes to report writing, prepare drafts of written documentation, including reports of meetings, programme and data analysis, by producing analytical background material on MENA region policy issues.

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Ghali poised to give green light to Iraq oil deal

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Secretary-General Boutros Ghali is likely to give clearance for the start of the Iraqi oil-for-food plan as early as Monday, paving the way for Baghdad to enter world oil markets for the first time in six years, senior U.N. officials said.

Although Mr. Ghali himself was cautious in predicting any start date, the officials said the Dutch-based Saybolt firm late on Friday found Iraqi pipeline equipment in order, the last technical obstacle left before the plan's implementation. At issue is Security Council Resolution 986 that allows Iraq to sell \$2 billion worth of oil in six months to buy food, medicine and other necessities for its people, suffering from the sanctions imposed in August 1990 after its troops invaded Kuwait.

Nearly two-thirds of oil sales revenues are earmarked for needy Iraqis, with the balance for war reparations and other Gulf war-related costs. Saybolt told the United Nations that key oil metering equipment was in "functional" order at the Zakho facility along the Turkey-Iraq border, through which the bulk of the oil will pass, a U.N. official said.

Their inspectors had previously found some of the equipment faulty or missing, requiring a return visit this week to ensure repairs had been carried out.

Mr. Ghali earlier on Friday said he was awaiting the Saybolt report before making a determination on when he would give clearance for the start of Iraqi oil sales, shying away from giving an exact date for starting the plan.

"When I receive it I will have a meeting and on the basis of this meeting we will decide (when the clearance for oil sales can be given)," he told reporters.

The procedure is for Mr. Ghali to give a one-page report to the council after which the deal can go ahead a minute past midnight, New York time, on the following day.

At U.N. headquarters, a group of oil experts or overseers who first need to approve any contracts before Iraq can start shipping the oil, are returning to New York next week, an indication the deal was being readied.

"We're still iffy on the timing," U.N. spokeswoman Sylvia Foa said. "Obviously we are getting closer to the magic moment for the implementation of Resolution 986. But we cannot pinpoint with any accuracy when he will be able to transmit the final report to the council."

Iraqi Oil Minister General

Amir Rasheed said oil exports would start Tuesday. But U.N. officials downplayed the timing, noting the work schedule for the overseers was not settled and oil contracts can take up to 24 hours for review.

Iraq and the United Nations signed the terms for the oil-for-food deal on May 20, but implementation has been a lengthy process, and was actually suspended in early September after Iraqi troop incursions into northern Kurdish regions of the country.

However, all political obstacles were removed on Nov. 25, when Iraq dropped demands for control of key aspects for the monitoring the deal on the ground, and other details.

Before invading Kuwait, Iraq exported more than three million barrels per day (bpd). Considering current world oil prices, Iraqi oil exports would amount to under 600,000 bpd, according to the oil deal plan.

U.N. experts charged with monitoring exports of Iraqi oil under the U.N. oil-for-food deal arrived in Baghdad on Saturday, the official Iraqi agency (INA) said.

Double calories for Iraqis

Iraqis will double caloric intake when Baghdad starts importing more food under a humanitarian deal with the United Nations, according to a World Food Programme (WFP) official.

Each Iraqi will receive 2,030 calories a day instead of the current level of 1,200 calories once the oil-for-food deal takes effect, the WFP official was quoted as saying in Saturday's editions of the Al Jumhuriyah newspaper.

The United Nations estimated last year that four million Iraqis were living in a "precarious" state and between 20 per cent and 29 per cent of children were underfed because of the U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq since 1990.

An Iraqi source told AFP that the government planned to double the quantity of some items under the ration system as well as introduce new products.

The government provides monthly rations of rice, sugar, flour, oil and tea as well as soap and powdered milk for infants.

The first food and medicine shipments under the deal are expected to arrive two months after the first oil is exported.



EXCAVATOR: People look at the shovel of an open-cast mining excavator in Schoeningen, near Braunschweig, Germany on Saturday. The excavator had to pass the road to move to a new coal area (Reuters photo)

Peres says Europe and U.S. should coordinate policy on peace process

PARIS (AFP) — Former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres called on Saturday for coordinated policies by Europe, France and the United States to help keep the Middle East peace process going forward.

"There must be in the diplomatic domain what was done in the economic domain," Mr. Peres said after meeting French President Jacques Chirac for one hour.

He was referring to success by donor countries to the Middle East in coordinating their policies.

"It is unthinkable that you have someone who arrives from Europe in the morning suggesting compromises and then someone who arrives from the United States in the afternoon (suggesting something else)," Mr. Peres said.

Mr. Peres, leader of the opposition Labour Party, is on a private visit to France. According to Elysee spokeswoman Catherine Colonna, the meeting between Mr. Peres and Mr. Chirac centred primarily on the peace process with both men saying they were "worried about the development of the situation."

The former Israeli premier also discussed with the French head of state his project for a peace institute.

After the talks he said that negotiations on the future of Hebron were now only blocked on "two or three points of totally technical character."

"I would expect the Palestinian side and the Israeli side to conclude the agreement and get rid of the Hebron problem, so we shall be able to continue with other issues of great importance that are awaiting."

"Maybe there is an air of distrust which we have to get rid of. We cannot continue with the peace process without changing the climate. There is a need for an effort on the Palestinian side as well, not only on the Israeli side," he added.

Asked about his insistence on pressing for a government of national unity, he said that it was the best solution for the future. "I think that next year could be the most important in the history of the Middle East."

"Neither the Arabs nor we can wait four more years for the realisation of all the grand things which have been so far undertaken."



Former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres speaks to journalists after he met French President Jacques Chirac at the Elysee Palace on Saturday (Reuters photo)

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PNA demands U.S. and Russian pressure on Israel

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Palestinian cabinet on Saturday urged the United States and Russia to put pressure on the Israeli government to reverse its settlement policy and to implement signed accords.

"We call on the United States and Russia, co-sponsors of the peace process, to put pressure on Israel to implement accords already agreed and to put an end to its settlement policy in the Palestinian territories," said a cabinet statement following a meeting in Gaza City late Friday.

Higher Education Minister Hanan Ashrawi added: "Only a change of heart by the Israeli government can lead to a relaunching of the peace process. We refuse to modify accords already signed, which must be implemented in their entirety."

Dr. Ashrawi was referring to Israel's refusal to carry out its long-delayed military withdrawal from most of the West Bank town of

Hebron, due to have taken place in March under 1995 Oslo accords.

Since taking office in June, rightwing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has infuriated the Arab world by announcing a wave of expansion to existing Jewish settlements in the West Bank, Golan Heights and around Jerusalem.

This week he promised to further develop settlements in the Jordan valley area of the West Bank, saying the area would remain part of Israel forever.

Palestinian Finance Minister Mohammad Nashashibi said after the cabinet meeting: "We reject the pursuit of Israeli settlement in the Palestinian territories, and protest against Israel's plan to annex the Jordan valley."

The Israeli-Palestinian track of the peace process is locked in stalemate over the Hebron withdrawal, with each side blaming the other for the deadlock.

Israeli soldier killed, several wounded in S. Lebanon

TYRE (Agencies) — An Israeli soldier was killed and another two were wounded Saturday in an attack by guerrillas in the Israeli-occupied "security zone" in South Lebanon, security sources said.

Six Lebanese civilians were wounded in retaliatory Israeli shelling on a village outside the buffer zone, police sources said.

The guerrillas detonated a bomb as an Israeli armoured patrol moved along a road leading to an Israeli position in the Beaufort Castle on the edge of the central sector of the buffer strip, the sources said.

The fighters also fired a number of mortars at the Israeli patrol, they said, adding that one Israeli soldier was killed and another wounded.

Hizbollah's military wing,

Islamic Resistance, took credit for the attack in a statement released in Beirut.

In retaliation, Israeli artillery pounded the Iqlim Al Tuffah region and the Nabatiyah area, clusters of villages and Hizbollah strongholds east of the southern city of Sidon, as well as the village of Kfar Tebait on the edge of the "security zone."

Six Lebanese, including a 60-year-old woman, a 71-year-old man and a teenager, were wounded when anti-personnel shells fell on the main square of Kfar Tebait, the police said.

The shelling came despite an April 26 accord which stipulated that Hizbollah and Israel should refrain from targeting civilians during their fighting in South Lebanon.

Muasher visit to Israel not finalised yet

(Continued from page 1)

for further talks on Jordanian-Iraqi trade and Iraq's use of Aqaba port for its imports (see page 3).

Dr. Muasher added that the council of ministers approved the recommendations of the ministerial committee that will be followed by the government to grant special amnesty to a

number of prisoners before being referred to his Majesty King Hussein for ratification. The recommendations provide for special amnesty for a number of prisoners except those who were charged with espionage, drug-trafficking, embezzlement, bribery, crimes, traffic fines, robbery, rape and kidnapping.

Amman hosts exhibition of equipment

(Continued from page 1)

\$30,000 will be made on Monday and another will be made after the accounts of the event are finalised, he said.

He noted that it was rare that the special forces of any country assumes such a role in an exhibition in order to present itself and gain familiarity with advanced equipment as well as raise funds for itself rather than draw from the state treasury.

"With the recent establishment of the Special Operations Command (SOC), HRH Prince Abdullah has managed to concentrate training and equipment for elements such as military, public safety, specialist police operations, intelligence and other agencies that require a rapid response to given situations under a unified command structure," said the press release.

"This has significant benefits in training, manpower, the efficient use of resources, and, significantly, more efficient use of financial resources," it added.

While no specific business deals are expected to be concluded during the event itself, as is the case with exhibitions of this nature, Mr. Winkley said the equipment and light weapons on display could attract wide interest from the various agencies and organisations expected to visit the display.

Deals would involve actual performance displays and subsequent licensing by the concerned governments to sell the equipment to the potential buyer subject to general restrictions that govern such sales.

The organisers have also set up a small firing range for small weapons on the exhibition grounds. Testing facilities that require special arrangements will be worked out in close coordination with the Jordanian Armed Forces in response to specific requests.

The Amman event is the 27th exhibition organised by COPEX, which has been operating in the field for the past 14 years, according to Mr. Winkley.

"It is significant that an international famous exhibition such as COPEX should be in Jordan," said the organisers' press release. "It highlights Jordan's status as a viable convention and tourist destination and should encourage other organisers of international events to take a serious look at the country (and) its potential event resources."

France seeks help in Europe in hunt for bombers; rights groups urge not to make Arabs scapegoats

PARIS (R) — France has sought help from other European countries in the hunt for bombers who attacked a Paris commuter train on Tuesday, killing three people and injuring 94, the interior ministry said on Saturday.

But it refused to confirm or deny a French television report saying France had sent its neighbours a list of 13 people suspected of involvement in the attack.

"We indeed addressed a request for cooperation from German police as well as to police in other European countries," a ministry spokesman told Reuters.

"This move is part of the routine investigations and verifications that we have initiated in the framework of this investigation," he said.

In Bonn, German police confirmed French authori-

ties had asked them to help track down the bombers but added that they were not actively searching for suspects.

A spokeswoman for the Federal Office for Criminal Investigation in Wiesbaden confirmed a report in Saturday's Bild newspaper which said French authorities had asked German police to be on alert as some of the suspects, thought to be Algerian, may have fled to Germany and others to Italy.

French authorities have said in the past that they were uneasy about the activities of Algerians in Belgium, Britain, Sweden and Germany.

No one has claimed responsibility for Tuesday's blast.

The Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA) claimed responsibility for a series of bomb attacks in

France in 1995 in which eight people were killed and 160 injured.

French newspapers said investigators believed the bomb used in the Port Royal attack may have weighed up to 20 kilograms. It was packed in a bulky gas canister placed under a seat in a wheeled bag similar to those used by grocery shoppers.

Police were investigating the theft last month from a petrol station in an area with a large Algerian immigrant population of around 40 gas canisters of the type used in the attack, newspaper said.

They were also dubious about the authenticity of several telephone calls to radio Luxembourg claiming responsibility for the bombing in the name of the GIA and saying other attacks would follow unless militants arrested last year were

freed, the papers said.

Police said on Friday that an Algerian man carrying a false passport was detained at the northern French port of Calais on Thursday while trying to board a Channel ferry for Britain.

But investigators concluded after questioning that he had no link to the train bombing, sources close to the probe said.

The man was to be questioned further in Paris, they added.

The French human rights league has called on authorities not to make France's three million Arabs scapegoats for the attack.

It asked that police refrain from systematically treating Arabs as suspects and singling them out in crowds for identity checks and body-searches.

Turkish ruling party under probe

ANKARA (AP) — Prosecutors are investigating the activities of the ruling Islamic party to see if they violate Turkey's laws against anti-secularism, news reports said Saturday. If officials of the Welfare Party are found to be in violation, the party of Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan could be shut down.

Ankara's state security prosecutor Nuh Mete Yuksek has sent the attorney general's office video tapes and transcripts of speeches by several Welfare Party officials pointing to their anti-secularist content, the daily Milliyet reported.

It was not immediately clear if the attorney-general's office would move to have the constitutional court take up the case.

COLUMN

Charles, Diana to visit S. Africa

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Prince Charles and his former wife, Princess Diana, are to pay separate visits to South Africa next year during which they will meet with President Nelson Mandela, the Johannesburg Star said. Diana's visit will be a private one and is being scheduled for the first half of the year, the report said, quoting unnamed government officials. She will meet Mandela and also pay a visit to her brother, Earl Spencer, who lives in Cape Town. The report said Prince Charles would pay a state visit to South Africa in the second half of the year, possibly November.

'Miss Universe' held for scam

STRASBOURG (AFP) — A 37-year-old woman who passed herself off as an ex-Miss Universe to persuade people to donate to a scam charity was charged with fraud and impersonation, judicial officials said. The woman persuaded several donors to hand over some 100,000 French francs (more than \$20,000) in cash for a bogus charity — rest, hope and family, the officials added, but was caught when she attempted to cash a false cheque drawn on the account of the Strasbourg city authorities to the sum of 300,000 francs.

Guadalajara bans swearing at soccer referees

GUADALAJARA, Mexico (R) — To the relief of long-suffering referees, soccer fans will be banned from swearing at soccer matches in Mexico's second largest city. The Guadalajara city fathers, concerned about lewd insults by spectators, issued the ban on Thursday, officials said. Offenders will face stiff fines of 30 days of the minimum wage, or about \$100, and 36-hour jail sentences. The conservative, pro-church National Action Party, which has ruled Guadalajara for almost two years, has already forbidden foul language in market places and banned city employees from wearing mini-skirts.

No mercy for meter-feeding grandmother

CINCINNATI (R) — A judge declined to dismiss charges against a grandmother who was hauled off to jail for feeding strangers' parking meters — her birthday and St. Nicholas Day notwithstanding. Judge John West of Cincinnati municipal court heard final arguments on the case and said he would issue a ruling on Dec. 20. The grandmother, Sylvia Statton, has become a minor celebrity since her arrest on Oct. 24 on charges of obstructing official business and disorderly conduct. She was jailed briefly after tossing 15 cents into two expired parking metres as a police officer, who told her to stop, was writing a ticket for one of the vehicles.

Dentist had personal shoplifter

ROSEVILLE, Minnesota (R) — A well-to-do dentist and his family have been charged with receiving stolen goods after allegedly employing their own personal shoplifter to steal designer clothes and crystal, police said. Gregory Dick, a prominent 58-year-old dentist, his wife Judy, 56, son James, 32, and daughter Stacy Zahran, 33, were charged on Thursday with receiving more than \$250,000 in stolen goods over the past few years that included Armani suits.